

# Monumental Brass Society

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TRANSACTIONS

# Monumental Brass Society

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# Obligations and Strategy: Managing Memory in the Later Medieval Parish

Clive Burgess

*Primarily concerned with commemorative practice within England's late medieval parishes, this essay first explores the means by which the commemorative impulse became embedded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and, second, looks at factors, both general and local, which particularly assisted with managing memory within parishes. The essay then turns to consider how individuals endeavoured to weave themselves into the parish liturgy, especially through repeated ceremonial such as anniversaries and by commissioning chantry Masses. Having outlined the context of commemoration, the article reviews in more detail how tombs and brasses functioned as one element among the complex of mnemonic apparatus commonly assembled within parish churches by the eve of the Reformation.*

Rather than dwelling on the more immediate characteristics of later medieval brasses – such as patronage, provenance and appearance – the following seeks to situate these memorials in the broader devotional regime that operated in the century and more before the Reformation. As a result, this essay will dwell first on the circumstances prompting their development and commission, and thereafter consider the context in which they functioned as one mnemonic device among the many that benefited the souls of the departed – and which, cumulatively, enhanced the praise offered to God in the churches of the later medieval English realm. If the picture on offer is composed of broad brush-strokes this is because it covers a wide canvas: it explores, on the one hand, the linkage between the doctrinal and administrative systems of the Church, while, on the other hand, attempting to place the personal and communal commemorative arrangements that formed so distinctive a part of contemporary belief and practice.

## I

When starting to consider the nature of later medieval commemoration a number of questions immediately arise. Why did men and women strive so assiduously to be remembered? How generally did they contrive to maintain their presence? And what, therefore, was the broader array of commemorative devices among which memorial brasses took their place? In answering these, the following discussion proceeds to identify a number of co-ordinates – eventually building up a matrix of guiding principles – reflective of the manner in which motives and strategies, as well as agents and agencies, intermeshed to embed commemorative imperatives among the priorities of the faithful. For while commemoration functioned as a distinctive aspect of later medieval religious belief and motivation, it also served a number of other roles: we need to make a number of broader connections, and explore their implications, if we are properly to understand the uses of memory and why it was managed so attentively in the century or more preceding the Reformation.

In addressing the first, and most fundamental, of the questions just listed, it pays to cast back our sights to the late eleventh or twelfth centuries, to that period when, within Western Europe, peace had – to some extent – broken out. As a result, released from the obligation to defend itself against external predators, Christendom itself began to embark on ambitious collaborative campaigns in the Holy Land. But at home, relieved from the constant pursuit of military and spiritual self-defence, Christian society had the chance to take stock and, where necessary, recast basic

strategies in the light of new circumstances. Within the higher ranks of the Church some now chafed against what they saw as the undue control exercised by lay elites, particularly kings and magnates.<sup>1</sup> While the latter had greatly enriched the Church with endowments and, over the generations, had founded, extended and defended many of its institutions, such nurture came at a cost. Princes and noblemen expected to exercise a role in appointing those, like bishops and abbots, who governed the Church. Lay patrons, moreover, required such appointees to contribute to government, bolstering administration in, and assisting with the defence of, the localities and the realm: some now began to feel that such roles seriously compromised their spiritual office and vocation. In its attempt to free itself from lay domination and, by ending lay investiture, to assert 'right order in the world', the Church struggled in vain.<sup>2</sup> Princes and their peers were not about to abandon long-held rights and, even within the Church, many regarded the novel claims of some colleagues as unnecessarily extreme – why bite the hand that had been so generous for so long?<sup>3</sup> But, if the degree of 'reform' in the political arena ultimately proved limited, other attempts at amendment fared better.

Wise counsel had realised that, were the church ever to liberate itself from domination by the mighty, it had to cultivate alternative means of support and to develop other sources of revenue.<sup>4</sup> It needed funding from the broader, less threatening, body of the faithful: this called for pastoral and penitential remodelling. The Church could not expect common people to engage with and contribute towards it unless salvation were generally attainable – in other words, ordinary Christians could only be expected to participate had they a realistic hope of sharing in the benefits that the Church existed to minister. As a result, rather than continuing with the severe penitential standards pertaining heretofore that restricted salvation to the few – be they monks or, like kings and aristocrats, those who procured substitutive penance from monks – the Church fashioned a regime better able to stimulate and accommodate the multitude.<sup>5</sup> On the one hand, largely (and, perhaps, ironically) as a result of lay initiative in manors and in villages, the parish network had crystallised by the twelfth or thirteenth century and this ensured that priests might now more easily be on hand both to teach in and to minister to local neighbourhoods.<sup>6</sup> Such pastors were supported by tithe, paid by all the faithful; in developing

1 R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church* (Harmondsworth, 1970), chapters 2 (ii and iii), 4 (ii and iii) and 5 still provides a stimulating perspective on these developments.

2 A phrase taken from the memorable opening sentence of G. Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society*, transl. R. Bennett, 5th edn. (Oxford, 1970).

3 That some, even among the ranks of churchmen, had no sympathy with the reformers is evident from a survey of Becket's contemporaries on the English bench of bishops – some, like Gilbert Foliot, were quite happy to continue as the king's men. In the next generation, it is worth pondering the career of Archbishop Hubert Walter, who, while undeniably doing the bidding of kings without demur, may in many respects have achieved more for the benefit of the Church in England than Becket (see C.R. Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government, 1170-1213* (Manchester, 1956), chapter 2 and *passim*).

4 For this, and what follows, it is worth finding R.W. Southern's review (entitled 'Between Heaven and Hell') of J. Le Goff, *La Naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris, 1981) published in *The Times Literary Supplement*, no. 4133 (18 June 1982), pp. 651-2.

5 See my "'A Fond Thing Vainly Invented": An essay on Purgatory and Pious Motive in later medieval England', in *Parish, Church and People: Local Studies in Lay Religion, 1350-1750*, ed. S. Wright (London, 1988), pp. 56-84, which is heavily indebted to Southern's review article mentioned in the previous footnote. On the earlier, relatively draconian systems of penance, see T.N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton, 1977), chap. 1.

6 As described, for instance, in R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989), chaps 4-6.



Fig. 1. Souls being released from Purgatory by means of prayer and good works,  
 Carthusian Miscellany, northern England (Mount Grace?), c. 1460 (BL, Add. MS 37049, f. 24v)  
 (photo.: British Library)

this revenue, the Church clearly began to tap into new and productive reserves.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, theological developments mollified the sacrament of Penance resulting, in part, in a sharper definition of the purpose of Purgatory. Here, in the ‘third place’ or anteroom to Heaven, the penitential faithful would be purified from the stain of sin. This process could be expedited both by their supplications to the saints and by initiatives that obliged the living to remember and pray for them (Fig. 1). Penance did not now have to be completed before death: where earlier penitential systems had demanded this, ordinarily proving impossible for the multitude, satisfaction could now be completed even in death and with assistance, as noted, from agents such as the ‘special dead’ or the duty-bound living.<sup>8</sup> Even if, realistically, the Church failed to slough-off the demands from the mighty, new penitential teachings – particularly as broadcast by the friars from the early thirteenth century and bolstered thereafter by parochial clergy progressively more adept at preaching and hearing confession – worked to persuade the broader mass of the faithful to participate.<sup>9</sup> Such factors help to explain the high levels of commitment and investment that the faithful would come to display. In England, to take but two instances, from the thirteenth or fourteenth century onwards the laity began to underwrite the building campaigns that transformed so many parish churches; by the fifteenth century, their largesse also supported an increasing number of clergy – staffing bigger churches.

The clearer definition of Purgatory also encouraged charity: to benefit from intercessory

prayer, the individual (or sometimes a group) had to give in order to receive. Quite simply, the wealthy, the ‘penitentially challenged’, commissioned good works and also gave, be it to the poor, or the clergy, or the Church more generally – the last of these priming the steady investment in church building just noted. Penitents did this to be remembered: in the prayers of the saints constituting the Church Triumphant; in the prayers of the Dead already in Purgatory, that is, by the Church Suffering; and in the prayers of those amongst whom they had lived and who were to come after them on Earth, the Church Militant. Those who benefited most from such generosity – that is, the poor, the clergy, and other parishioners still living (whose own obligations towards their parish regimes were, as a result, reduced by predecessors’ largesse) – were particularly obliged to commend their benefactors. Understandably, those who had given generously to secure intercession developed various means, both aural and visual, to prompt and, as far as possible, guarantee commemoration. This might take one, or more, of a number of forms, such as Masses, or formal prayers, or the more informal recollection of neighbours. Together these had a marked effect on ceremonies within, and on the visual environment of, parish churches. This penitential scheme nevertheless worked to give ordinary Christians hope: it rendered salvation more feasible, encouraged participation, and sustained the generosity of the faithful.

Had such reform been intended to free the Church from an undue reliance upon the

7 On tithe, see for instance R. Swanson, *Church and Society in late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), chap. 5 (esp. section 3).

8 Purgatory would not be formally defined until the Council of Lyons in 1274, and finally defined at the Council of Florence in 1439 (as a result of the tentative progress towards union with the Eastern Orthodox Church, which had traditionally always given more weight in its theology to the ‘third place’).

9 For stimulating discussion both of the general and more particular themes in question, see B. Thompson, ‘The Academic and Active Vocations in the Medieval Church: Archbishop John Pecham’, in *The Church and Learning in Late Medieval Society: Studies in Honour of Professor R.B. Dobson*, ed. C. Barron and J. Stratford, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 11 (Donington, 2002), pp. 1-24. Pecham, it may be noted, was a Franciscan.

generosity of 'the great and the good', with all that this entailed, it failed. Kings and secular elites did not abandon the authority they exercised over the Church: the latter was simply too important and too pervasive an institution, whose influence either in bolstering behavioural precepts or in furnishing loyal and capable agents in the localities, proved so essential in government that its autonomy could not be countenanced. But the Church did more than simply reinforcing shared values and, indeed, more than providing a highly-trained civil service; it afforded access to essential spiritual benefits, themselves possessing a political profile. It was no accident that the Church before the Reformation had evolved a rich variety of institutions, be they monasteries, colleges, hospitals, almshouses and, compensating for their small size by sheer number, parishes: the liturgy celebrated within each, with greater or lesser sophistication, functioned cumulatively to offer praise to God and elicited His grace in return, protecting society against the snares of the devil, and profiting the faithful. Such services proved indispensable in promoting the fortunes of the realm in times both of peace and of war, which all-important function further wove the Church into the warp and weft of 'the State'.<sup>10</sup>

So, a fundamental principle emerges as our first 'co-ordinate'. On the one hand, as widespread generosity enriched the Church, those who benefited incurred the obligation to commemorate benefactors: this greatly improved liturgical standards and ritual capabilities. As a result, and with the passage of time, and especially as the doctrine of Purgatory became more deeply embedded, the decorous celebration of the liturgy was no longer confined to monasteries and bigger liturgical institutions; smaller institutions including, by

the fifteenth century, parish churches, collaborated with increasing effect. As a positive result, arguably, of the 'struggle' between Church and State, the former encouraged wider participation – garnering support from the faithful with great effect – on the understanding that Christians, both living and dead, should intercede for each other. But on the other hand, and perhaps ironically, the latter (that is, the State) developed an interest in encouraging such developments. For if, cumulatively, they markedly improved the liturgy, then the spiritual imperatives that encouraged this development – and which were bound to benefit the realm, no less than parish communities and individuals – assumed a political dimension, dovetailing closely with the interests of the kingdom. But the cross-fertilisation of those impulses that 'paved the way to the hereafter' with those practices that secured the national benefit proved productive, and helped to shape later medieval commemoration. Memory was not simply an end in itself, for the benefit solely of the individual; a broader social and even patriotic value also asserted itself. 'The increase of Divine service', which rested in large part upon the urge for commemoration, and which promoted generosity, acted as a transformative impulse for individuals within the local community, as well as for the institutions that together constituted the Church; it also procured local, regional and the national benefit.

## II

If the first 'co-ordinate' has, by way of background, focused on the interplay of eschatological and national interests, several decidedly practical considerations also benefited evolving intercessory regimes. Common sense suggests that benefactors would only have been persuaded to open-handedness could they be

<sup>10</sup> I pursue this theme in more detail my 'An Institution for all Seasons: The Late Medieval English College', in

*The Late Medieval English College and its Context*, ed. C. Burgess and M. Heale (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 3-27.

confident of being reliably remembered. The living, and the dead, of necessity developed strategies to ensure regular, if not continuous, commemoration, and these had to be failsafe. Given that, before the Reformation, sustained generosity by Christians from a variety of classes emerges as a notable characteristic of local no less than of national regimes, the ‘systems’ of memory seemingly worked well. As a preliminary, three factors may be identified that assisted with the effective imposition of a commemorative ethos. First, as a general observation, it is worth commenting on the wisdom of the Church Fathers (like Gregory the Great, among others) who recognised the wisdom of syncretising the celebration of the Christian mysteries and rituals with pagan traditions, many of which rested on seasonal observances.<sup>11</sup> This meant, for instance, that the more important celebrations in the Christian calendar reflected ‘the turning of the year’, so that the Incarnation (with God the Son assuming human form, giving basic hope to Mankind) fell just after the winter solstice, as the days began to get longer, and that the Passion (emphasising the triumph of Life over Death) fell, ordinarily, shortly after the Spring equinox, at the beginning of the growing-season. On such basic building-blocks (re-enacting and commemorating God’s redemption of Mankind), the Church proceeded to fashion a superstructure of saints’ days and cults, commemorating the Holy Family, the Apostles, the doctors and martyrs of the Church, as well as more local heroes and heroines, integrating the parade of feasts and liturgies with and within the rhythms of the year. This very basic *modus operandi* set in place

an important mnemonic, bolstering personal commemoration, involving individual details in an accommodating Christian calendar that gave shape and form to the passage of time. Christians might weave themselves into a broader, and deeply involving, ritual fabric itself reflective of the pulse of the seasons.

The second intrinsic factor bolstering ‘memory’ – and here we begin to focus on parish regimes – was that the local religious ‘ring-masters’, incumbent priests, not only supervised the celebration of the Christian calendar (with all its ramifications) but also had a vested interest in making memory work. For, as hinted, commemoration not only funded extra clergy but also led to larger holdings of improved liturgical equipment and, moreover, prompted the rebuilding and often the enlargement of churches, the cumulative effects of which rendered parishes, and the status of incumbents, steadily more impressive. Established clergy clearly had a vested interest in ensuring that parishes should work as efficiently as possible as commemorative corporations, because the penitential imperatives underpinning practice proved so successful in involving the laity and stimulating spiritual no less than financial investment. The third (and final) intrinsic factor takes its cue from the suggestion that priests had an interest in working for the benefits of the parish and of the laity. Even quite recently, such comment may well have been considered odd: in the context of the later medieval Church, clergy and laity were habitually conceived as akin to cat and dog – temperamentally and inevitably at loggerheads.<sup>12</sup> Consideration of parish evidence (albeit material mostly

11 See, for instance, Pope Gregory’s advice in his letter to Abbot Mellitus, recorded in Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. B. Colgrave and R. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), Book I, chapter 30.

12 For two essays each offering an appraisal of earlier ways of thinking and more constructive approaches to the topic of anticlericalism, see C. Haigh ‘Anticlericalism

and the English Reformation’, *History*, LXVIII (1983), pp. 391-407, and P. Marshall, ‘Anticlericalism Revisited? Expressions of Discontent in Early Tudor England’, in *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, ed. C. Burgess and E. Duffy, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 14 (Donington, 2006), pp. 365-80.



produced by, and reflective of, lay interests), by contrast, indicates that clergy ordinarily worked closely and harmoniously with laity and, in particular, the lay managers of the parish, the churchwardens.<sup>13</sup> These agents, too, had a vested interest in maintaining efficient commemorative systems. For churchwardens were frequently men on the make: success in this office often served as the first ‘rung on the ladder’ to higher office in either craft or municipality, or both. Wardens would work hard to discharge their duties efficiently, if only to prove their capabilities. At the very least, they would be determined to ensure that the wishes of forebears should be fully and faithfully observed. Moreover, given the time and energy it took, service as churchwarden represented a significant good work: any warden would want his (or, occasionally, her) stint to be successful, not only because of the urge not to fail either themselves or their predecessors but also to be remembered gratefully in turn as a servant who had advanced parish interests. In order both to boost their earthly ambitions and also to ensure commendation from generations to come, churchwardens had vested interests in the successful operation – indeed, the enhancement – of a commemorative regime upon which they, too, would eventually depend. Current churchwardens, in other words, had every reason for setting future managers a good example. In short, parish regimes had influential defenders, both clerical and lay, possessed of a close – effectively interwoven – interest that management should faithfully

defend the interests of those commemorated. Together, the three factors just identified provide another ‘co-ordinate’. Within a broader mnemonic regime that integrated personal aspiration for expeditious salvation with the national interest, potent local factors also operated. These worked (in any and every parish) encouraging clerical and lay managers to collaborate and maintain an efficient, if increasingly elaborate, round of management and commemoration – as one generation gave way to another, each adding its donations and demands – as the locality articulated itself within the universal rhythms of the year and a cyclical Christian liturgy.

Before embarking upon a more detailed appraisal in subsequent sections, it is worth mentioning that much of what follows draws its inspiration, as well as precise examples, from the archive of one of the better documented parishes in later medieval England – that of All Saints’, Bristol.<sup>14</sup> Unlike most English parishes, where little or no written evidence from the decades preceding the Reformation survives, All Saints’ possesses sufficient to shed light on a functioning commemorative regime. For all that it numbered fewer than two hundred communicant members, it appears a reasonably well-heeled parish sited in a town that seems, for the most part, to have flourished in the fifteenth century; as a result, no claims can be made for typicality.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, much-better-than-average

13 A theme that I pursue further in ‘Pre-Reformation Churchwardens’ Accounts and Parish Government: Lessons from London and Bristol’, *English Historical Review*, CXVII (2002), pp. 306-32.

14 The records surviving for this parish are now accessible in *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints’, Bristol*, ed. C. Burgess, Bristol Record Society Publications, 46, 53 and 56 (Bristol, 1995-2004) – hereinafter, references to material in the All Saints’ Church Book, printed in the first of these volumes, is as ASB1, with the relevant page number.

15 Bristol did experience difficulties in the aftermath of the Hundred Years War, particularly with the loss of Gascony and the resulting dislocation of the wine trade; it seems, however, to have possessed a sufficiently broadly based economy (and served a sufficiently wealthy hinterland) to have survived these problems without undue distress. The best short appraisal of its fortunes in the later medieval period is to be found in M.D. Lobel and E.M. Carus-Wilson, ‘Bristol’, in *The Atlas of Historic Towns*, 2, ed. M.D. Lobel (London, 1975), pp.10-14.



Fig. 2. William Chapman, tailor (d. 1446) and wife Alice, Little Missenden, Bucks., LSW.II, palimpsest formerly in St. Dunstan-in-the-West, London. The inscription records that William arranged for a chaplain to celebrate Mass in perpetuity, a candle to burn before the Blessed Sacrament at the high altar continually and an anniversary Mass to be said for ever. (rubbing: Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore)

documentation permits a reasonably close analysis of a number of the procedures that underpinned practices there, and of the developments afoot in the period. In the circumstances of otherwise all too pervasive ignorance, it would be folly to ignore the lessons from such a parish for fear of atypicality.

### III

In response to the questions of how the faithful contrived to sustain their presence, upon whom they might depend, and what arrangements they therefore made, the event self-evidently inaugurating many of the relevant observances was death itself. The services associated with the funeral, indeed, provided sufficient ceremonial scope to shape many of the longer rituals of commemoration. The wealthier members of a parish clearly intended these events to be memorable. Exequies on the eve of interment (chanting the psalms from the Office of the Dead, the *placebo*) with the *dirige* on the morrow, immediately preceding the Requiem Mass, after which the burial would take place, were all either celebrated or observed by the parish priest assisted by chaplains and clerks, recruiting as necessary from other parishes to make the numbers stipulated by the deceased. Knells would be rung for several hours, candles and torches burnt, and members of the poor

particularly required to attend the service, often holding more lights and specially attired in clothes, either of black or sometimes russet (and which the mourners could thereafter keep), provided by the deceased's estate. Doles of bread also persuaded many more paupers to attend the funeral liturgy on condition that they should pray. Moreover, in the years following interment, wealthy men and women often stipulated that conspicuous charity should continue, in forms such as doles of food, winter fuel for the aged poor, dowries for poor girls or education for poor boys. Funerals might be occasions noteworthy not just within but also beyond the parish, with bell-ringing especially meaning that no-one could remain unaware of the event – in addition to, perhaps more practically, attracting those poor whose prayers were especially sought.

Funerals inaugurated longer-term observances, too, often in the form of 're-played' rites which were commonly assembled by the wealthy, but aspects of which were also commissioned by the less wealthy. Many either asked for or expected the celebration of a month mind, a sequence of thirty Masses (with or without exequies) in the days following the funeral, whose culmination was usually a more ostentatious celebration, certainly with the exequies and perhaps prolonged bell-ringing and generous almsgiving,

on the thirtieth day.<sup>16</sup> But, strikingly, many commissioned a further ‘re-run’ of the funeral service, perhaps predictably, at the year’s mind – more often simply referred to as the obit or anniversary – with all the composite rites observed (Fig. 2). During the exequies and the Requiem Mass the parish hearse was draped with a pall, with torches or candles burning at either end of the same, just as if the corpse were once more present. The parish clerk or sexton tolled the parish bells for a long period and, in addition, the bellman went about the town, ringing his hand-bell and broadcasting a more personalised exhortation to townsmen and women to pray for the deceased – again identifying for whom the knell was sounding. Summoned by the same, the poor were to attend and to pray, with penny or ha’penny loaves given to each as their reward; in that the money specifically set aside for such doles would often have been sufficient for sixty or a hundred loaves, evidently the intention was to attract a multitude.

The funeral liturgy lent itself to repetition, with rites sustaining the ‘presence’, and emphasizing the need, of identified individuals. While, in practice, the funeral services of the wealthy often extended for a month, the implications of the annual ceremony deserve fuller consideration. Two points arise. First, by the decades preceding the Reformation, anniversaries had long been mainstays of the commemorative repertoire. Most functioned for a span of years, in which case family or executors ‘found’ the wherewithal for them

from the beneficiary’s estate – and, certainly in some instances, exceeded the stated duration.<sup>17</sup> But, second, some anniversaries were perpetual, resting on a property endowment ordinarily established by the beneficiary before his or her decease. Indeed, in urban parishes, and particularly by the later fifteenth century, some anniversary founders devised property (such as a shop or tenements) to their parish on the understanding that the main ceremonial ‘return’ would be an anniversary, celebrated with some pomp, to mark the date of the donor’s death. In these cases, however, most of the proceeds went to the parish – typically, shall we say, from an annual income of £3 13s. 4d., the sum of 13s. 4d. might be reserved for the anniversary (ample for a reasonably sophisticated ceremony), with the larger remainder earmarked for parish coffers, although with the proviso that the parish keep the endowment in good repair. Such arrangements, while clearly providing the parish with welcome extra income, nevertheless depended upon the faithful repetition of observances, both to mark an act of generosity and to keep the donor’s memory alive for those who came after. Failure to keep the anniversary properly would mean that the endowment would revert to another ‘trustee’ – a neighbouring parish, perhaps, who therefore had an interest in scrutinising the rites provided. Effective commemoration again depended upon the efforts both of the clergy, celebrating and attending the exequies and Requiem Mass and, equally, of the churchwardens to whom fell the duty not only of ensuring that all the details of

16 While some testators specifically asked for a month mind, it should be borne in mind that such a well established element of the post-obit repertoire may well have been provided by many executors in the absence of explicit instruction, either honouring standing agreements with the testator, or simply acting on their own initiative to furnish a battery of ‘pious uses’ sufficient to satisfy the needs of, perhaps, a spouse’s or a parent’s soul.

17 A number of the widows, such as Alice Chestre, Katherine Laynell and Maud Spicer, whose provisions are celebrated in the All Saints’ Church Book, all exceeded the *post obit* requests found in their respective husbands’ wills. Plausibly, testamentary stipulations should be regarded as minimum requirements – a theme pursued in my essay ‘Chantries in the Parish – or, ‘Through the Looking-glass’’, in *The Medieval Chantry in England*, ed. J. Luxford and J. McNeill (Leeds, 2011), pp. 100-29.

the ceremony were regularly observed but also of managing the endowment, ensuring it was both maintained and profitably let. Such arrangements profited the parish, but parishioners only embarked upon them when confident of effective collaboration by clergy and lay managers; the successful discharge of such obligations – among others, to be mentioned shortly – not only enhanced the parish's financial and, as a result, its liturgical profile, but also helped to keep beneficiaries 'present' for succeeding generations. This, in turn, caused others to make similar arrangements, and progressively embedded the habit of commemorative collaboration between clergy and leading parish laity.

The principles of repetition and common profit also underpinned another commemorative service. To fix, initially, on the first of these attributes, the characteristic of annual observance – axiomatically expressed in anniversary celebrations and, apparently, very long-established – eventually gave rise by the thirteenth century (becoming considerably more common thereafter) to the formalization of a more frequent, regular celebration of the Mass.<sup>18</sup> Chantries, as such services were commonly called, provided for daily celebration over a protracted duration, rarely less than a year and often for much longer. Given that, by Canon Law and in ordinary circumstances, a priest might celebrate only one Mass a day, any who wished to benefit from such a service was,

in effect, monopolising the celebrant, and had to be prepared to find the latter's stipend – which, by the mid and later fifteenth century, meant providing for an income in the region of £6 per annum.<sup>19</sup> Finding such a sum rendered chantry foundation expensive; most were envisaged as lasting for a year or two, although, certainly in towns, services of four or five years were not uncommon, and wealthier townspeople might seek a service of ten or twelve years' duration. In such cases, as with limited-duration anniversaries, widows or heirs usually found the wherewithal to pay the priest's stipend from the estate of the named 'founder' and beneficiary. But, what must also be pointed out – illustrating how a chantry worked to the common profit – is, on the one hand, that sustaining a stipendiary inevitably provided the neighbourhood with the services of an extra priest, who, while he could not celebrate the parish Mass, might nevertheless assist with the canonical hours and, during the Eucharist, serve either as a deacon or in the parish choir. The multiplication of such priests, certainly by the fifteenth century, enabled many parish churches – both in towns and, to a lesser extent, the countryside – which had hitherto been single-priest enterprises, to house a plurality of priests.<sup>20</sup> Most of these were directly supported by the affluent laity and, cumulatively, improved the standards of the liturgy available to all in the parish, as well as providing the personnel to visit the sick or educate local children. On the other hand, many founders

18 K.L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 2-5.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 2 and 277-81 (the latter reference reveals differences between practice in mainland Europe – often permitting fewer than seven Masses in a week – when compared to that in Britain, where Masses were normally celebrated daily). On the relevant synodal legislation, see *Councils and Synods II*, ed. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1964), I, pp. 126-7, 143-4, 606; also W. Lyndwood, *Provinciale* (Oxford, 1679), Lib. III, tit. 23, cap. i.

20 In the absence, as yet, of much detailed work comparing the achievements of the laity in rural parishes with those of their urban cousins, secure judgements as to the relative numbers of foundations in either milieu remains hazardous – although the tendency would certainly be to assume fewer in the former than the latter. Nevertheless, the question arises of who was copying who: if more prolific in their commissions, one wonders whether merchants may essentially have been attempting to keep up with, or to match, the standard of provision achieved by their social superiors in the countryside.

or, in practice, their widows who actually sustained these arrangements for the requisite number of years – and who, again, often exceeded the durations stipulated – provided equipment, such as vestments, candlesticks or books, used in the first instance by the chantry priest and adding to the opulence of the liturgy. Once the service ended, these objects became parish property; in this manner, temporary chantry foundation proved an important means of augmenting the stock of liturgical gear in many parishes.

If chantries of temporary duration enriched the parish, those – albeit many fewer – chantries of perpetual duration similarly represented a very significant, and generous, gift, essentially providing a ‘free’ (from the parish’s, and parishioners’, point of view) auxiliary for all time. As with anniversaries, a service in perpetuity invariably required a property endowment, with the rents from the constituent properties paying for the celebrant’s stipend as well as for the repair of the various tenements so that they could continue to be profitably leased. The accumulation of such endowments, when added to the properties ostensibly given for perpetual anniversary foundation, meant that during the course of the fifteenth century some parishes, certainly in towns, became propertied institutions able to support a plurality of priests in the longer, as well as the shorter, term. The duty of maintaining a growing property portfolio, which fell in the main to the churchwardens (assisted as and where necessary by the parish priest), greatly augmented the responsibilities of parish management but, as a corollary, significantly enhanced the communal profile of the relevant parishes – as well-managed, propertied institutions, they could support a plurality of employees and provide an increasingly sophisticated, very often sung,

liturgy. Such was the importance attached to the properties and to any equipment provided for chantries and, equally, such was the opprobrium incurred by any mismanagement or loss, that these developments (directly resulting from the commemorative impulse) played an important part in turning parishes into notably tenacious managerial – and, indeed, competent liturgical – enterprises. Moreover, in contrast to the impression derived from much of the extant literature, tending always to emphasise the founder’s interest, we may begin to understand why contemporaries regarded anniversaries and, more especially, chantries as communal more than personal amenities. The parish organised the maintenance of the properties comprising the endowments, its officials supervised the anniversaries that so frequently accompanied such investment – either of simple property devise or of perpetual chantry foundation – and, were it the latter, the same also superintended the behaviour of celebrants, issuing reprimands as necessary.<sup>21</sup> These endowments, and the priests they supported, contributed towards the local liturgy and the greater good of the parish community and, thence, towards the greater benefit of local, and even national, Christian society. Commemoration worked as a catalyst, establishing durable services, ensuring their reliable observance, and prompting a number of developments with wider-reaching ramifications – for the parish, its form and management, and even its spiritual contribution to broader imperatives – than might at first seem likely.

In summary, commemorative Masses, be they annual or daily (or, in practice, both), added significantly to the liturgy of the parish; as such, the dead, who interposed themselves adroitly into the rhythms of the year, contrived both to

21 It should be noted that perpetual chantry founders invariably required at least one elaborate anniversary,

celebrated in perpetuity, as a complement to their ‘everyday’ service.

enrich the round of parish rites and, with more and better equipped priests, enhanced the celebration of the liturgy within the neighbourhood. The poor, too, seem regularly to have come to the parish, attending services and praying for dead parishioners, which added to the parish's status both as a charitable and as an intercessory enterprise. The founders of extended services depended upon, and stimulated, the interaction of the laity (especially churchwardens) with the clergy. Moreover, where property was involved, the value of what had been given became perhaps the best guarantee of the faithful observance of the founder's wishes; parishes could not countenance the opprobrium of loss. A further 'co-ordinate' therefore presents itself. Individuals, the great majority of whom conceived of their spiritual destiny as shaped by the capabilities of their parish, contrived to weave themselves into the local liturgy. Moreover, by developing the corporate prestige and prowess of their parish, individuals (as parishioners) not only bolstered themselves with a firm assurance of being remembered, but also obliged subsequent generations of clergy and parishioners to respond to benefactors' needs, both as individuals and also within a consequently enriched corporate context.

IV

Other more immediate measures permitted those about to die and the dead further to weave themselves into the consciousness, and prayers, of those still living and who would come later. Those seeking commemoration commissioned images and provided items which, to our eyes, elicited a prayerful response often in a fairly blatant manner. To take funerary images first, the wealthy might commission painted alabaster effigies to adorn their tomb chests, representing themselves and their spouse, or spouses, either in armour and finery or, as appropriate, in a merchant's



Fig. 3. John de Oteswich, alabaster tomb, early 15th century, St. Helen's Bishopsgate, London (formerly in St. Martin Outwich) (photo.: Christian Steer)



Fig. 4. John Bacon, citizen and woolman (d. 1437) and wife Joan, All Hallows Barking, London, M.S. II Bacon left money for a ten-year chantry at Easton Neston, Northants., where his parents were buried (rubbing: Martin Stuchfield)

apparel or canonical robes (Fig. 3). Somewhat less sophisticated, but more cheaply purchased and much more commonly provided, the dying and the dead alternatively commissioned memorial brasses, again of themselves in martial apparel, or in their merchant robes or their vestments, with (as appropriate) spouses wearing their best, placed either on tomb chests or on the floor (or, occasionally, on the wall) of the church or one of its side chapels or transepts, and ordinarily in the vicinity of an altar – often the designated site for the celebration of personal intercessory Masses (Fig. 4).<sup>22</sup> In passing, it is worth pondering, in addition to the obvious function of commemorating their patrons and exhorting intercession from onlookers, what these representations would have contributed to a more particular context: for they could well have operated, year after year, as an integral part of their subjects' anniversary services. It is certainly possible that the parish hearse draped with the pall, which itself suggested the presence once again of the corpse, could have been placed near – and thus worked in conjunction with – the relevant brass, further suggesting and defining some semblance of the 'presence' of the subject commemorated by the anniversary Masses. At the very least, a brass could have helped to focus and personalise the intercession offered by those attending the rites. More generally, estimating the numbers of such brasses proves unrealistic since many more were evidently commissioned than are now traceable – in illustration of which, it proves salutary to consider London's parishes, rich as they undoubtedly were, where the dearth of reference to brasses in either wills or extant churchwardens' accounts is sharply contradicted by reference in the Commissioners' Reports for 1552/3.<sup>23</sup> These

itemize (among much else) the barrow-loads of latten carted from various churches, much of which would previously have served as memorial brasses, but ripped up so that it could be sold; ordinarily we have all too scant a clue of the memorial brasses that once clearly adorned parish churches. In addition, churches housed many other images in close conjunction with those representing deceased parishioners: concomitant images on tombs or brasses included, either in carving or etched in metal, angels in attitudes of prayer or praise, mourners or the children of the commemorated kneeling in prayer, and, working together with armorial bearings or merchants' marks, the depictions were commonly accompanied by text, carved in the tomb chest or perhaps inscribed round the edge of the brass (Figs. 5, 6). Those commemorated left ample means of identification, including their names and dates of death, and were ordinarily specifically depicted as praying, accompanied by others doing likewise – as well as identifying the deceased, the texts exhorted more prayer, as did the attitudes of those represented on the tombs or memorials. The response expected from onlookers was both implicit and explicit.

Other mnemonic images and exhortation related less directly to funereal practice and more directly to the commission of devotional decoration in and around the church, although it must be remembered that all the decorative and commemorative elements in a church interior combined to work cumulatively. Nevertheless, some benefactors might glaze a window, quite possibly depicting a patron saint or similar specially valued intercessors, and then (typically at the foot of the window) might include an image of themselves evidently in

22 The elision of the place of interment, marked by the brass (with its 'Hic iacet'), with the altar at which commemorative Masses were to be celebrated, no doubt represented a very intentional choice on the part of the deceased.

23 Available in print as *London Churches at the Reformation: with an account of their contents*, ed. H.B. Walters (London, 1939).



Fig. 5. Simon Seman (d. 1433), vintner and alderman of London, St. Mary, Barton-on-Humber, Lincs., M.S. II (reproduced from M.B.S. Portfolio)





Fig. 6. Thomas Rowley, sheriff (d. 1478) and wife Margaret, St. John the Baptist, Bristol, LSW.1  
(rubbing: Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore)

prayer to the saint or saints thus depicted, but again with an accompanying text naming the donors, possibly mentioning the date of their death, but more consistently reminding the onlooker to pray for the donors' souls (Fig. 7). Others paid for, or contributed towards, the cost of erecting and decorating of the screen that separated nave from chancel, and that supported the rood and the figures of Mary and John, but again usually commissioning images of saints, or angels, or perhaps the doctors of the Church in the panels towards the base of the screen, and on which they might also include small images of themselves, usually in an attitude of prayer, or perhaps insert an escutcheon or rebus (Fig. 8). Given the opportunity for decoration, be it with images of saints, or scenes from biblical stories, that the interior walls of any church afforded, ample scope existed for including other painted images – or, at the very least, the names or mottoes – of benefactors in and around the church. Patrons might leave their mark on the outside of the church, too, with initials or with rudimentary escutcheons, for example, in flush-work or in painted carved-work positioned over the string course on the external wall of the nave or chancel, or at various stages on the elevation of the church tower – perhaps marking, and commemorating, a parishioner's particular generosity to a building campaign. In sum, contemporaries employed a variety of visual techniques to commemorate their lives, mark their generosity to their parish, and state their future needs, either within or as part of the external fabric of the building. If not always able to provide a reasonably life-like image (which, nevertheless, they frequently could and did), benefactors would certainly use initials, or heraldry, or rebuses, or other marks to record their identity, their erstwhile presence, and their contribution to the commonweal of the



*Fig. 7. John Gedney, Elizabeth Fitzwauter and Robert Cavendish, north aisle window, Long Melford, Suffolk*

community – explicitly prompting reciprocal prayer and commemoration.

Further, those who sought to perpetuate their presence within the parish gave items, usually with a specific liturgical function, that would closely associate the donors with a significant aspect of the rites and ceremonies observed within the church – indeed closely linking them with the most sacred aspects of the holy mysteries. Thus, to take one example from many, on the high altar of All Saints', Bristol, stood a tabernacle of gold and silver with one figure of Saint Saviour and flanked by two figures of John Haddon and Christine, his wife, accompanied by angels, effectively fixing these two donors on a vessel placed at the most sacred point within the church and placed, figuratively, in close proximity to a figure of Jesus the Saviour.<sup>24</sup> In a somewhat more functional association, which again may stand for many other gifts, Henry and Alice Chestre, also of All Saints', gave a hearse

<sup>24</sup> ASB1, p. 42.

cloth of black worsted which was to be used at parish funerals, but this cloth was embroidered with the initials 'H & C & A & C' with a scripture in gold exhorting onlookers to *Orate pro animabus Henrici Chestre et Alicie uxoris eius* – pray for the souls of Henry Chestre and Alice his wife.<sup>25</sup> At parish funeral services, when a prayerful and watchful congregation could be guaranteed, the latter would be reminded by an undeniably blatant visual prompt also to remember, and pray for, the souls of earlier parish benefactors. Hangings, too, which might celebrate a particular cult, could also be indelibly associated with their donor by the use of initials; thus in an inventory for All Saints', it emerges that the parish had 'a banner of blue sarsnett with flowers of gold and the image of All Hallows with two letters, T and P, which was of the gift of Thomas Parnaunt'.<sup>26</sup> As a final, slightly different, example, it is worth mentioning how, in 1496, some seven or eight years before she died, Maud Spicer, the widow of Thomas Spicer alias Baker, gave to the church 'an honourable suit of vestments of white damask with flowers of gold and all the orfrees of the suit of cloth of gold, the which suit contains a chasuble, two tunicles with their apparels belonging, and two copes of the same with shells of silver enamelled with the arms of the Grocers, that cost unto her £27'.<sup>27</sup> If not using name or initials in this particular instance, Maud appears to have associated an ostentatious gift, clearly eye-catching in its own right, with the arms of her husband's craft and one in which she had possibly continued to play a role as a widow – and, in view of their wealth, Thomas undoubtedly occupied a position of some prominence within this craft in Bristol. Evidently Maud chose to include a reminder of her husband's, and plausibly her own, commercial affiliation on the copes that she bequeathed to All Saints', and which was used at High Masses and feast days – on which

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.



Fig. 8. John Baymunt (d. 1485) and his wife praying to SS. Jerome and Ambrose, rood screen, Foxley, Norfolk (photo.: Lucy Wrapson)

solemn occasions connections would have been made that prompted prayer, the more so from any future members of the craft witnessing the celebration of the holy mysteries within this church. In short, parishioners seeking commemoration gave both vessels and vestments that they contrived to associate with themselves, either by names or symbols, or by figurative depictions – continuing a theme already encountered with either effigies or decorations either in the interior or exterior of the church building – with cults and ceremonial, so ensuring 'that they should not be forgotten'. Indeed, by

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

integrating themselves so assiduously within the fabric and decoration of the church, and with its services and equipment, bolstering such association by likenesses and by exhortations to prayerful remembrance, and with regularly celebrated commemorative services, it is clear that many parishioners contrived to be hardly less present in death than they had been in life.

To complete this point, however, we turn again to the clergy and their input to the effective function of the parish as a commemorative corporation. Undoubtedly benefiting from the generosity of their parishioners, whose largesse certainly facilitated the celebration of a far more opulent and sophisticated liturgy, the clergy clearly had an interest in encouraging their charges to further and sustained generosity; but they did this in conjunction with constructive efforts to remember benefactors on a regular and detailed basis. To take one example of the full range of this process, as orchestrated by a member of the parish clergy, the All Saints' Church Book records how Sir Maurice Hardwick, the incumbent of the parish from 1455 until 1473, 'procured, moved and stirred' one Agnes Fylour to give her house (a tenement known as The Rose in the High Street) to the parish. In return for this generous benefaction, an anniversary, costing 12s. per annum, was to be celebrated for her soul, although – following the principle mentioned earlier – the parish profited from its residual income to the tune of at least £2 10s. per annum.<sup>28</sup> But Hardwick's reciprocal initiatives help to suggest why Agnes, at that particular time, proved susceptible to his exhortation. 'He also laboured to compile and make this book [presently bound into, or certainly copied into, the extant All Saints' Church Book] for to be a memorial and a remembrance for ever for the curate and churchwardens that shall be for the time ... and for to put in names of the good doers and the

names of the wardens of the church and what good they did in their days that they must yearly be prayed for'. More than this, and quite possibly as a result of problems encountered from Agnes Fylour's step-son, 'who would have broken her last will and [alienated] the house to his own use', Hardwick 'let make one coffer with lock and key to put in the evidence of the livelode of the church, where before they lay abroad likely to be embezzled and mischieved: now they have been set under four keys, the vicar to have one key, the two proctors [churchwardens] two keys and the most worshipful man in the parish the fourth key'.<sup>29</sup> As well as doing his best to safeguard the legal security of any benefactions that parishioners might make, and clearly involving prominent parishioners in this very process, this extract more specifically reveals that Hardwick himself set about compiling a list of 'good-doers' so that they, the benefactors, would be prayed for properly and without fail.

It begins to emerge, then, that at All Saints' – and no doubt elsewhere – the clergy, as well as starting to create an archive of parish interests, compiled lists. On the one hand these could be checked, to ensure the discharge of parishioners' instructions; on the other hand, and possibly more importantly, such lists were designed to be read aloud. References in contemporary wills make it plain that All Saints', in common with all other parishes in Bristol, had a bede-roll of benefactors for recital at High Mass on Sundays. Similarly, and in common with other parishes in the town, All Saints' celebrated a General Mind, a collective anniversary for all the good-doers of the parish, which in this parish at least (other parishes reserved different dates) involved reading a detailed bede-roll on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, and was celebrated liturgically on the following Thursday and Friday, after which rites followed a party with cakes and ale or wine.<sup>30</sup> On the Sunday, nevertheless, the vicar (presumably)

28 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

29 *Ibid.*

read aloud within the parish the full list of benefactors and their benefactions: what could be seen in use in and around the parish church was explicitly associated with its donor – no-one could be unaware of the provenance of any particular item, and of their own (that is, the onlooker's) obligation. Moreover, on the assumption that the lists of benefactors and benefactions now recorded in the All Saints' Church Book may be identified as prototypes of the lists rehearsed in the church on that day, and that these lists reflect, to some degree, the work that Maurice Hardwick had invested to compile lists of names and gifts (albeit kept up to date by his successors), then it is well worth pondering the prologue to the list.<sup>31</sup> It lays bare the dynamics of the process: the Book contained 'the names of good doers and well willers by whom livelode ... has been given unto the honour and worship of Almighty God and increasing of divine service, to be rehearsed and shown yearly unto you by name, both man and woman, and what benefits they did for themselves and for their friends and others by their lifetimes, and what they left for them to be done after their days, that they shall not be forgotten but had in remembrance and be prayed for of all this parish that be now and all of them that be to come'. But this was not simply to ensure the faithful discharge of debts to the past, it was also admonitory: 'for [to be] an example to all you that be now living that you may likewise to do for yourself and for your friends while they be in this world, that after the transitory life you may be had in the number of good doers rehearsed by name and in the special prayer of Christian people in time coming that by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, by the intercession of our blessed Lady and of all the saints in heaven, in whose honour and worship this church [All Saints'] is dedicated, you may come to the everlasting bliss and joy that our blessed lord has redeemed you unto'. The parish esteemed rehearsal by name: the clergy facilitated

this by compiling lists, to ensure effective and regular remembrance, and to prompt yet more generosity, further enhancing the parish as a commemorative enterprise.

Conflating the various themes sketched in the previous paragraphs enables us to grasp a further 'co-ordinate'. If, as seems plain, parishioners had arranged for a variety of visual mnemonics, be they tombs, or brasses, or painted images, or names, or vessels, vestments and hangings with figures or initials, which maintained a visual presence within or about the church, it is nevertheless vital also to bear in mind that such initiatives were reinforced by the regular recitation of names, often associating these with donations. We encounter a mnemonic stratagem that depended upon the combination of the visual and the aural, and the resulting litany of those who had 'increased divine service' frequently featured as a composite part of the holiest rites celebrated and supported in the church. Regularly subjected to this litany, onlookers and listeners could not but be well aware of who had given what, and of to whom symbols and signs referred; sight was intentionally combined with sound to establish past benefactors and their benefactions, effectively, as a parallel liturgy, recalling those who had provided for the increasingly sophisticated observances that constituted divine worship within the church. The living and the dead sought by a combination of means – liturgical, visual and aural – to remind succeeding generations of their presence, their contribution and their needs. It also seems plain enough that the clergy (many of whom were generous as benefactors), and churchwardens, and the laity comprising the parish congregation more generally, all responded whole-heartedly to these promptings. Or, to put it another way, the dead in Purgatory, the Church Suffering,

30 Other parishes in the town each seem to have had their own dates for equivalent celebrations.

31 ASB1, p. 4.

employed a number of means to remind those still living, that is the Church Militant, both clerical and lay, of their duties; this obligation was enacted, and indeed sharpened, by the presence of the Church Triumphant that was inevitably both explicit and implicit within the physical decorations and the liturgical celebrations in the church of the Church (Fig. 9). Memory and its management contrived to encapsulate the various hierarchies in a microcosm, with individual donors and benefactors in any particular church subsumed into, and assisted by, a broader all-inclusive dynamic that marshalled all the helpers, seen and unseen, that comprised the whole Church.

#### V

This discussion has been at pains to establish a number of ‘co-ordinates’, a series of intermeshing factors and influences on which contemporaries might rely insofar as they helped to embed and to reinforce commemorative imperatives within the priorities of the faithful and also within the mores of society more generally. These can be reduced to a number of elisions: first, as broader religious aspirations ‘chimed in’ with and supported prevailing political interests; second, as an essential congruity between the rhythms of the seasons and liturgy was itself underpinned by the interests of constructive collaboration between both clergy and the laity; third, as individuals who sought to be commemorated wove themselves into, and thereby enriched, both the liturgy and the deeper interests of the parish community; and, fourth, resulting from the intrusion of both visual and aural mnemonics, so that the liturgy itself came to represent both individuals and the Christian community, assisting the elision of the immanent with the transcendent within the confines of the church. As a result of the destruction visited in the mid sixteenth century and after, which obliterated this ‘cat’s cradle’ of influences and interests, and as a consequence, too, of a tendency to focus mainly on personal initiatives to the exclusion of broader



*Fig. 9. Last Judgement, mid 15th century,  
Holy Trinity, Coventry*

spiritual initiatives, it is all too easy to miss the more complex strategies delineated in this paper. But accepting the fact that, because of their innate durability, brasses have lasted reasonably well, and have themselves attracted a deserved curiosity, we nevertheless need to think beyond them: for most contemporaries they were simply one facet (and a reasonably inexpensive element, at that) of a much more ambitious prospectus of both personal remembrance and communal profit.

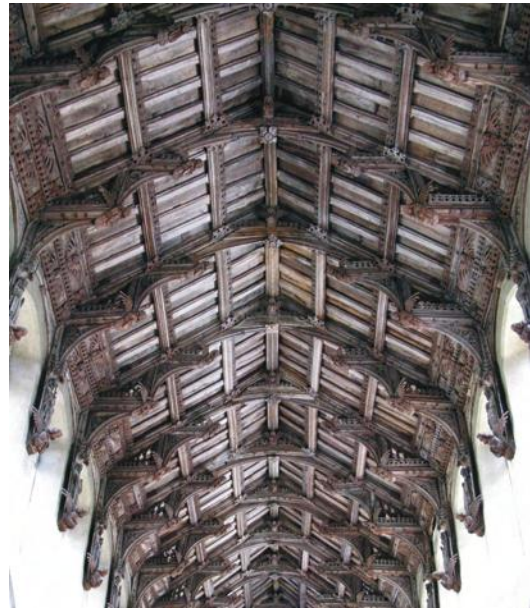
In parallel with this, we need to think beyond the confines of the parish and realise that such concerns worked as but small elements in an institutionally far richer organisation. While many parishes were themselves undergoing the transition from single-priest foundations into corporations able to mount a more ambitious liturgy, nevertheless, before the dissolutions of the mid sixteenth century, many other, grander foundations had either been established or, more frequently, were substantially enriched by the great and the good.<sup>32</sup> Such foundations, be they monasteries or colleges, hospitals or almshouses, ordinarily rested upon a commemorative rationale, and most were particularly intended to celebrate the liturgy in an opulent manner meant to benefit society by



Fig. 10. John Barstable (d. 1411), founder of Trinity Almshouse, Trinity or Barstable Almshouse Chapel, Bristol, LSW.I  
 (formerly in SS. Philip and James, Bristol)  
 (rubbing: Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore)

the worship of God (Fig. 10). In England on the eve of the Reformation the religious establishment was both extensive and complex; much was soon to be destroyed, and if the loss of tombs and brasses in parish churches is serious enough, then the eradication of such monuments in the larger, once more opulently endowed, institutions, can only be that much more extensive and debilitating. It may be hard, presently, to both remember what has been lost and how it all once worked. But brasses may serve their purpose: that is, as keys to turn, so that we can begin to enter not only the parish church as it, in its more rudimentary way, attempted to recreate heaven in the locality, but may also be prompted to remember that more elaborate buildings and far more sophisticated regimes also functioned within the localities and society more generally. The cumulative effect of all these 'liturgical generators' was intended to be prodigious; institutional commemoration and celebration certainly enriched the Church, but it also profited the nation and, naturally, glorified God.

Brasses inevitably, and intentionally, remind us of individuals; but they invariably take the onlooker beyond the individual. In serving their own benefits, men and women within the commemorative system of the later medieval Church (some of whom are still depicted) also 'plugged in' to a matrix of co-ordinates that ensured broader political and spiritual benefits and which, fundamentally, extolled the Creator. In hoping for heaven, as expressed for instance in a brass, we need to remember that individuals ordinarily identified themselves with more complex strategies and, implicit within them, wider, richer and, naturally, more transcendent purposes. We still have a few of



*Fig. 11. Angel roof, Woolpit, Suffolk*

the multitude who looked up from the floor of any medieval church; we need to remember, too, that a multitude of saints and angels invariably looked down from the upper reaches of any such building (Fig. 11). The liturgy, both general and, on occasion, more personalized, furnished the dialogue for the 'conversation' embodied in any parish or, indeed, in any larger church; it is hoped that this essay has helped to fill in more of this discourse, suggesting some of the means of communication invoked and employed, and to have indicated some, at least, of the broader purposes of commemoration.

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32 I discuss the proliferation in the late Middle Ages of often smaller, more adaptable, intercessory institutions, that nevertheless rested on a bedrock of older foundations, in 'An Institution for all Seasons: The Late

Medieval English College', in *The Late Medieval English College and its Context*, ed. C. Burgess and M. Heale (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 3-27.



# Each According to their Degree: the Lost Brasses of the Thorpes of Northamptonshire

Robert Kinsey

*The Thorpe family of Northamptonshire was one of the most successful legal dynasties in fourteenth-century England, producing two chief justices, one of the first lay chancellors of England and a member of the parliamentary peerage. This article explores the family's fortunes and self-image through a study of their monumental brasses in the cathedral churches of Peterborough and Ely. Whilst the Thorpes' brasses were destroyed during the Reformation and Civil War, drawings in Sir William Dugdale's 'Book of Monuments' and a surviving indent at Ely provide valuable clues as to their former appearance. It is argued that a close analysis of the content, style and location of their brasses, and comparison with other monuments, can reveal much about the family's ambitions, social connections and piety.*

It is well established that monumental brasses, and funerary monuments in general, can offer windows into the identity, social aspirations and religious concerns of those who commissioned them, whether that was the deceased themselves, their executors, or their family and friends. Detailed studies of the brasses commemorating members of the Cobham and Catesby families, for example, have shown how the analysis of a series of brasses belonging to a single family can provide insights into the ambitions and preoccupations of that family over several generations.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, it has been shown that the identification of comparable brasses

elsewhere, such as brasses of a similar style or design, can often provide clues to ties of kinship or the social circles in which a family moved.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I intend to show that these avenues of investigation can be applied to the brasses of another family: the Thorpes of Northamptonshire. Although the Thorpe family brasses are less well known and less complete than those belonging to the Cobham or Catesby families they can still offer significant insights into the family's self-identity, social connections and religious beliefs. What is more the Thorpe family were an upwardly mobile family affording us an opportunity to explore how the family's changing fortunes were expressed on their funerary monuments.

The Thorpe family first appear in the records in the 1170s as freeholding tenants in the village of Longthorpe (from which they derived their name), two miles west of Peterborough, Northamptonshire (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup> During the thirteenth century, as tenants of both the Abbot of Peterborough and the Waterville family, the Thorpes gradually built up their landed possessions in and around Longthorpe and by the 1260s they had effectively established themselves as the lords of the manor when William Thorpe acquired a licence to re-site the parish chapel of St. Botolph next to his residence at his own expense.<sup>4</sup> However, the

1 N. Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300-1500* (Oxford, 2001), p. 9; N. Saul, 'Bold as Brass: Secular Display in English Medieval Brasses', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. P. Coss and M. Keen (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 189-93; S. Badham and N. Saul, 'The Catesbys' Taste in Brasses', in *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers, Northamptonshire*, ed. J. Bertram (London, 2006), p. 36; N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 131-4.

2 S. Badham, 'Patterns of Patronage: Brasses to the Cromwell-Bourchier Kinship Group', *MBS Trans.*, XVIII, pt. 5 (2007), pp. 423-52.

3 For a full history of the Thorpe family, see R.C. Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement in Late Medieval England: The Thorpes of Northamptonshire, c. 1200-1391' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, 2009).

4 E. King, *Peterborough Abbey, 1086-1310: A Study in the Land Market* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 50-2.

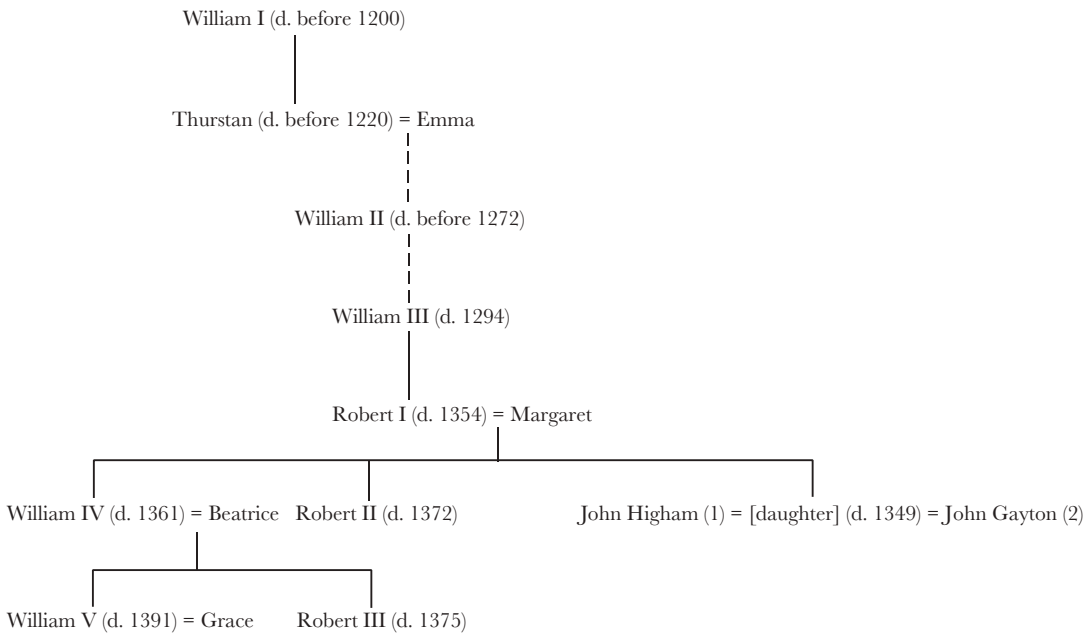


Fig. 1. Genealogy of the Thorpes of Northamptonshire

founder of the Thorpe family's fortunes in the fourteenth century was Robert Thorpe (Robert I). Robert significantly raised his, and the family's, prospects when he was appointed to the influential post of steward of the liberties of Peterborough Abbey in October 1309.<sup>5</sup> Following his appointment as steward, Robert was able to substantially increase his family's landholdings within the Soke of Peterborough, acquiring property at nearby Marholm and Maxey, Northamptonshire. From 1314 Robert was also serving as a local justice of gaol delivery and assize in Northamptonshire and by

1320 he had become a knight.<sup>6</sup> Longthorpe Tower, added to the Thorpe manor house in the early years of the fourteenth century and richly decorated with wall-paintings in the 1320s or 30s, still stands as a testament to his achievements.<sup>7</sup>

The next generation, building upon the solid foundations provided by Robert I, was even more successful. During the reign of Edward III, Robert's sons William IV and Robert II both found fortune within the legal profession.<sup>8</sup> Created serjeants-at-law together in 1339 the

5 *The White Book of Peterborough: The Registers of Abbot William of Woodford, 1295-99 and Abbot Godfrey of Crowland, 1299-1321*, ed. S. Raban, Publications of the Northamptonshire Record Soc., 41 (Northampton, 2001), no. 296.

6 R. Kinsey, 'The Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England: The Case of the Thorpes of Northamptonshire', in *Memory and Commemoration in Medieval England*, ed. C.M. Barron and C. Burgess (Donington, 2010), pp. 40-57, at 43.

7 E.C. Rouse and A. Baker, 'The Wall-Paintings at Longthorpe Tower near Peterborough, Northants', *Archaeologia*, XCVI (1955), pp. 1-57; E.C. Rouse, *Longthorpe Tower, Cambridgeshire* (London, 1987).

8 For a summary of their careers, see R.W. Kaeuper, 'Thorp, Sir William (d. 1361)', *ODNB*, LIV, p. 664, and W.M. Ormrod, 'Thorpe, Sir Robert (d. 1372)', *ODNB*, LIV, pp. 671-2.

two brothers soon became prominent pleaders in the king's courts and subsequently rose into the senior ranks of the judiciary.<sup>9</sup> In 1341 William IV was made a king's serjeant and in May 1345 he was appointed as a justice of the King's Bench, at which point he was knighted.<sup>10</sup> In November of the following year William IV was promoted by Edward III to the rank of chief justice of the King's Bench, a post which he held until 25 October 1350 when he was arrested for accepting bribes from five indicted men at a session in Lincoln. Although put on trial and condemned to death for his crimes, William ultimately escaped with his life and received a pardon from the king in March 1351.<sup>11</sup> Evidently too talented to be completely disposed of, William returned to royal service in May 1352 as a baron of the Exchequer and continued to serve on judicial commissions until his death on 27 May 1361.<sup>12</sup>

Robert II's career, although not quite as meteoric, was also highly successful. In 1345 he was appointed a king's serjeant and in June 1356 he was promoted straight to the rank of the chief justice of the court of Common Pleas and subsequently became a knight.<sup>13</sup> Robert continued to serve the crown dutifully as chief justice until 1371 when even higher office beckoned.<sup>14</sup> On 26 March 1371, following a parliamentary attack on the king's clerical ministers and the consequent dismissal of chancellor William Wykeham, bishop

of Winchester, Robert was appointed by the king as chancellor of England.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, Robert did not have much time to make an impression in his new role as he died in office just over a year later on 29 June 1372 at the London residence of Robert Wyville, bishop of Salisbury, in Fleet Street.<sup>16</sup>

Robert II and William IV both reaped substantial financial rewards for their services not only as king's justices but also as retained legal advisors to a number of high-ranking figures including the Abbot of Ramsey, Lady Elizabeth de Burgh, John of Gaunt and Edward the Black Prince. Investing much of their wealth in land, by the 1360s Robert and William had acquired an impressive collection of estates in the counties of Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Lincolnshire.<sup>17</sup> The two brothers' landed wealth and high-profile connections within the royal court, moreover, helped William's son, William V, to pursue his own successful career in royal service as a member of the Black Prince's household. William V later went on to become a 'king's knight' during the reign of Richard II and his services to the crown were ultimately rewarded with a parliamentary peerage in July 1381.<sup>18</sup> The Thorpe family's remarkable rise finally came to an end, however, on 16 April 1391 when William died without leaving any direct heirs. In his will William bequeathed the core of his

9 J.H. Baker, *The Order of Serjeants at Law*, Selden Soc., Supplementary Series, 5 (London, 1984), p. 156.

10 *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench*, ed. G.O. Sayles, Selden Soc., 7 vols. (London, 1936-71), VI, p. xciii; *Cal. Pat. R. 1343-45*, p. 464.

11 *Cal. Close R. 1346-49*, p. 126; J.R. Maddicott, *Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainers in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century England*, Past & Present Supplement, 4 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 48-51.

12 *Cal. Pat. R. 1350-54*, pp. 270, 522; *Cal. Close R. 1349-54*, p. 566; *Cal. Pat. R. 1354-58*, pp. 62, 122, 157, 335, 554; TNA: PRO, C 66/242, mm. 16d, 25d; C 66/244, m. 6d; C 66/250, mm. 4d, 10d, 20d; C 66/258, m. 8d; *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, XII, no. 41.

13 *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench*, ed. Sayles, VI, p. xciii; *Cal. Pat. R. 1354-58*, pp. 408, 465

14 *Cal. Pat. R. 1370-4*, p. 64.

15 *Cal. Close R. 1369-74*, pp. 287-8; W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, 2nd edn. (London, 2000), pp. 89-90; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 151-61.

16 *Cal. Close R. 1369-74*, p. 445.

17 Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, pp. 21, 56-9; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 118, 157, 182-3, 193-238, 263.

18 *The Complete Peerage*, ed. G.E. Cokayne, 14 vols. (London, 1910-59), XII, pt. 1, pp. 725-8; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 161-80.

estates and the right to bear the Thorpe coat of arms to his 'kinsman' Sir John Wittlebury (d. 1400).<sup>19</sup>

Sadly none of the Thorpes' funerary monuments has survived intact. There is no evidence relating to Robert I's monument (assuming that he had one) whilst a monument, in all probability a brass, at the London Black Friars commemorating Sir William Thorpe IV (d. 1361) was destroyed following the dissolution of the friary in November 1538.<sup>20</sup> Two more brasses situated in the nave of Peterborough Cathedral commemorating Sir Robert II (d. 1372) and another member of the Thorpe family (d. 1375) survived until the early 1640s but were ripped from their marble slabs when Parliamentary soldiers ransacked the church in April 1643 and any traces of their remaining indents were lost during the repaving of the cathedral floor in the eighteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Lastly a brass at Ely Cathedral commemorating Sir William V (d. 1391) was taken up from its marble slab, most likely during the Reformation or the Civil War, and only the indent of the brass now remains.<sup>22</sup>

Whilst the brasses of the Thorpe family have all been lost, there are a number of sources that can be used to reconstruct what they looked like. An important piece of evidence relating to

the two Thorpe brasses at Peterborough Cathedral can be found amongst the drawings in Sir William Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*, or *Book of Draughts*, now in the British Library.<sup>23</sup> In 1641, Sir Christopher Hatton, foreseeing 'the near approaching storm' encouraged Dugdale, a herald, to make drawings of surviving monuments around the country.<sup>24</sup> Starting at Westminster Abbey, Dugdale, accompanied by his draughtsman William Sedgwick, made a tour of the country and managed to visit churches in a total of eight counties, the vast majority being in Northamptonshire. In August or September 1641 Dugdale and Sedgwick reached Peterborough Cathedral and made drawings of eighteen monuments there, including two brasses belonging to the Thorpe family.<sup>25</sup>

The first Thorpe brass that appears in Dugdale's book is the one commemorating Sir Robert Thorpe II (d. 1372), which Dugdale records as being in the nave of the cathedral (Fig. 2).<sup>26</sup> This shows a marble slab upon which is the effigy of Robert Thorpe dressed in his legal robes with his hands pressed together in prayer. His head reclines on a lozenge-shaped cushion and his feet rest on what appears to be a lion. Robert's effigy is placed beneath an elaborately cusped single canopy above which rises a super-canopy, consisting of a rounded arch supporting an embattled entablature. The

19 Lincolnshire Archives Office, Lincoln (hereafter LAO), Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v; *House of Commons, 1386-1421*, ed. J.S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1992), IV, pp. 883-4. William V's death date is recorded in LAO, 5ANC:1/1/31.

20 J. Stow, *A Survey of London: Reprinted from the Text of 1603*, ed. C.L. Kingsford, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1908), I, p. 341; *The Religious Houses of London and Middlesex*, ed. C. Barron and M. Davies (London, 2007), pp. 116-21. I am grateful to Christian Steer for this reference and for sharing his thoughts on this monument.

21 S. Gunton, *The History of the Church of Peterburgh* (London, 1686), pp. 92-3, 333-40; W.T. Mellows, 'Medieval Monuments in Peterborough Cathedral', *Annual Report of the Peterborough Natural History, Scientific and Archaeological Soc.*, LXIV & LXV (1937 for 1935 & 1936), pp. 37-40.

22 W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995), pp. 116, 118, 120; I. Atherton, 'The Dean and Chapter, Reformation and Restoration: 1541-1660', in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. P. Meadows and N. Ramsay (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 172-9, 189-92; T. Cocke, 'The History of the Fabric from 1541 to 1836', in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. Meadows and Ramsay, pp. 213-14.

23 BL, Add. MS 71474, ff. 121, 122.

24 For discussion of Sir William Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*, see P. Whittemore, 'Sir William Dugdale's "Book of Draughts"', *Church Monuments*, XVIII (2003), pp. 23-52.

25 Whittemore, 'Sir William Dugdale's "Book of Draughts"', pp. 24-5, 47-8.

26 BL, Add. MS 71474, f. 121.

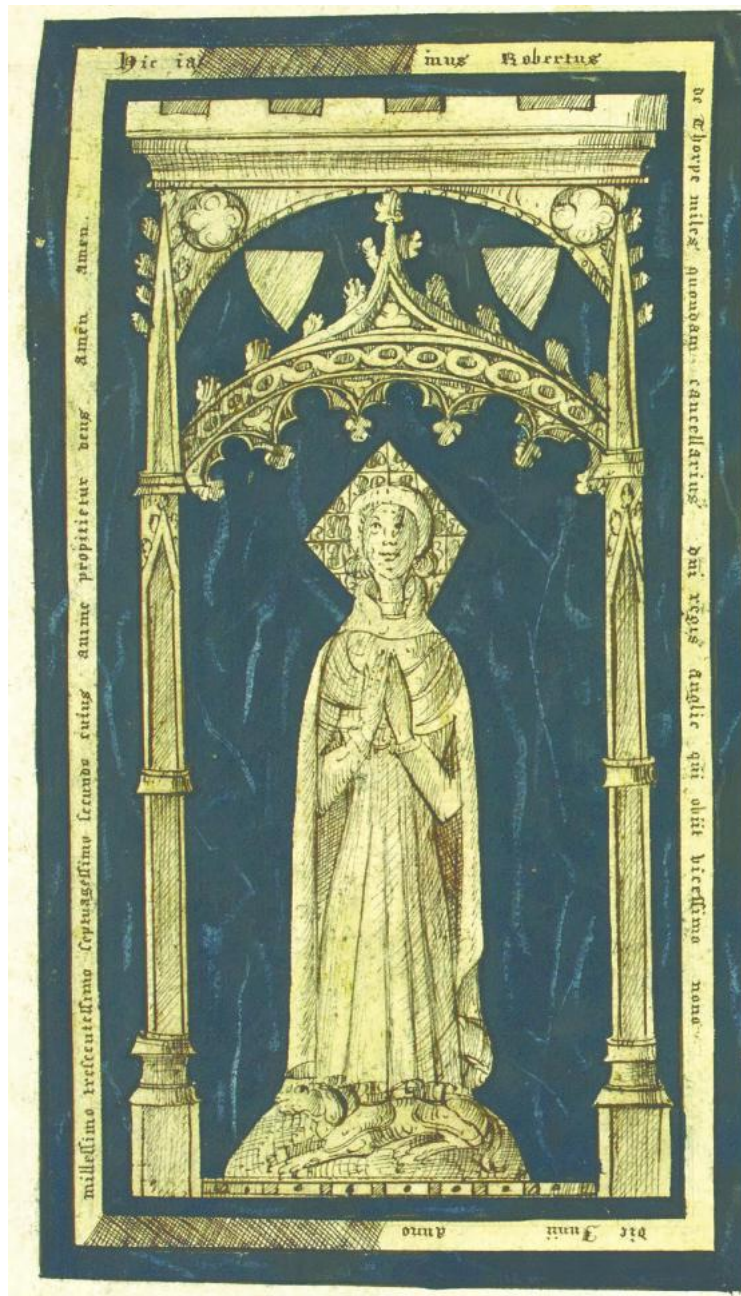


Fig. 2. Lost brass of Sir Robert Thorpe (d. 1372), Peterborough Cathedral (LSW.143)  
 from Sir William Dugdale's Book of Monuments (BL, Add. MS 71474, f. 121)  
 (Reproduced by permission of The British Library)

spandrels of the super-canopy's arch each contain a quatrefoil and between the canopy and super-canopy are indents for two effaced shields. A slightly mutilated Latin marginal inscription reads:

Hic ia[et dom]inus Robertus/ de Thorpe  
miles quondam cancellarius d(omi)ni regis  
anglie qui obiit vicesimo nono/ die Junii  
anno ... /millesimo trescentissimo  
septuagesimo secundo cuius anime  
propitiatur deus amen amen.

The missing gaps can be filled in by Simon Gunton (d. 1676), a minor canon of the cathedral in 1643, who in his *History of the Church of Peterburgh* (published posthumously in 1686) recalled the inscription as reading:

Hic iacet tumulatus Robertus de Thorp  
Miles, quondam Cancellarius Domini Regis  
Anglie, qui obit vicesimo nono die Junii,  
Anno Domini Millesimo, trecentesimo  
septuagesimo secundo, Cuius animae  
propitiatur Deus Amen.<sup>27</sup>

[Here lies buried Robert de Thorpe, knight, formerly chancellor of our lord the king of England, who died 29 June 1372. On whose soul may God have mercy Amen]

Material from Dugdale and Gunton can be supplemented by the work of the antiquary Browne Willis, who in his floor plan of Peterborough Cathedral, published in his *A Survey of the Cathedrals of Lincoln, Ely, Oxford and Peterborough* (1730), plots the precise location of Robert's monument. According to this plan, the

brass was located halfway up the north side of the nave between the fifth and sixth pillars from the west end.<sup>28</sup>

It is impossible to ascertain how much influence Robert had on the design of his brass. His will survives but it was drawn up on the day of his death and is very brief, simply leaving his soul to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary and granting his executors, Sir John Knyvet, chief justice of the King's Bench, John Harleston, Richard Treton, clerks, and John Bretton, the power to dispense the goods and properties that he held in London for the benefit of his soul in any way that they saw fit.<sup>29</sup> Like so many other wills it makes no reference to his tomb. Perhaps Robert had already conveyed his instructions to his executors. Given the brevity of his will it is likely that he had left more detailed directions concerning the distribution of his estates and his final wishes elsewhere. Alternatively he may have left the matter entirely up to his executors. The possibility of the latter is suggested by his decision to allow his executors to choose where he should be buried.

Although Robert died in London, his executors evidently thought it appropriate to have his body transported back to his native county and buried at Peterborough Abbey (now Cathedral). Peterborough Abbey was an obvious choice. Although by the late fourteenth century most members of the gentry and nobility were electing to be buried in their local parish church, rather than in the great monastic houses, the Thorpe family maintained a strong association with the monastery that seems to have overridden this fashion.<sup>30</sup> The abbey was

27 Gunton, *History of the Church of Peterburgh*, p. 93; W.J. Sheils, 'Gunton, Simon (*bap.* 1609, *d.* 1676)', *ODNB*, XXIV, p. 265. Dugdale's drawing indicates that the third word was 'dominus' and not 'tumulatus' as given by Gunton.

28 B. Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedrals of Lincoln, Ely, Oxford and Peterborough* (London, 1730), p. 475.

29 London Metropolitan Archives, The Husting Rolls of Deeds and Wills, Roll 100, no. 120.

30 N. Saul, 'The Religious Sympathies of the Gentry in Gloucestershire, 1200-1500', *Trans. of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Soc.*, XCVIII (1981), pp. 103-104; K. Stöber, 'Bequests and Burials: Changing Attitudes of the Laity as Patrons of English and Welsh Monasteries', in *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000-1400: Interaction, Negotiation and Power*, ed. E. Jamroziak and J. Burton (Furnhout, 2006), pp. 144-6; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 114.

located close to the core of the Thorpe estates and the family had longstanding tenurial and service ties to the monastery dating back to at least the early thirteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, Robert's burial in the nave of the abbey church, close to the processional way, ensured that his monument would be seen by a large number of people, helping it to fulfil its function to encourage prayers for his soul and to commemorate his achievements.<sup>32</sup>

What can be learned from Robert's brass? The first thing that is apparent, even from Sedgwick's rather crude drawing, is the brass's high quality and its preoccupation with the display of status. The canopy is particularly noteworthy. Canopies, with their connotations of sanctity, were considered to be a mark of distinction declaring that the person beneath it was someone of consequence.<sup>33</sup> Naturally the more elaborate the canopy the more eminent the commemorated was shown to be. Robert's brass not only had a richly decorated canopy but also a super-canopy topped off with battlements. Clearly, whoever commissioned the brass, the intention was to portray Robert as someone of considerable importance.

An even more important status symbol on Robert's brass was the use of heraldry, which declared his membership of the knightly classes. Whilst the pair of shields on the brass had already been effaced by Dugdale's time it can be assumed that at least one bore the Thorpe family arms, *Gules a fess between six fleur de lis argent*. Another aspect that the commissioners of

the brass were keen to emphasise was Robert's short spell as chancellor of England - his inscription recording that he was 'formerly chancellor of our lord the king of England'. Even though Robert had held the post for little more than a year it was still considered worth mentioning. The office of chancellor was after all the highest office in royal government and Robert was only the fourth layman to hold the office. Normally the position was held by an ecclesiastic. The inclusion of this title on Robert's brass thus marked him out as a royal servant of the very highest order.

A less obvious status symbol is the style of the brass. Although we only have Sedgwick's drawing to go by, it is possible to identify the Robert II's brass as a product of the London Series 'B' workshop: the embattled super-canopy being a feature that was used exclusively by this workshop in the late fourteenth century.<sup>34</sup> The employment of the London B workshop is significant as it had strong connections to the royal court and from the 1370s it was the workshop of choice for members of the gentry and nobility, high-ranking clergymen and the courtly elite. Indeed, it has been suggested that members of this workshop were later involved in the production of Richard II's tomb at Westminster Abbey.<sup>35</sup> Again this points to a desire by those who commissioned Robert's brass to emphasise his former connections to the royal court and his status as a figure of national importance. This intention is also reflected in the generous benefactions that Robert's executors made on

31 Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 25-36.

32 For a full discussion of the location of Thorpe family's burials and benefactions, see Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', pp. 40-57.

33 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 155.

34 I am grateful to Sally Badham for this point. S. Badham, 'Cast Copper-alloy Tombs and London Series B Brass Production in the Late Fourteenth Century', *MBS Trans.*, XVII, pt. 2 (2004), p. 124.

35 N. Saul, 'The Fragments of the Golafre Brass in Westminster Abbey', *MBS Trans.*, XV, pt. 1 (1992), pp. 30-2; S. Badham, 'Monumental Brasses and the Black Death - a Reappraisal', *Antiquaries Jnl*, LXXX (2000), pp. 223-6; Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory in Medieval England*, pp. 108-12; Badham, 'Cast Copper-alloy Tombs and London Series B Brass Production', pp. 105-27; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 81.

his behalf. Richard Treton, for example, gave money to each of the colleges at the University of Cambridge and 140 marks to St. Albans Abbey, both of which were patronized by members of the higher nobility and the courtly elite.<sup>36</sup>

What is perhaps most striking about Robert's brass, however, is that he is shown in the robes of a judge. He is dressed in a long robe or cassock and on his head he wears a coif, denoting his status as an elite member of the legal profession. In addition, he wears a mantle or 'chlamys', a lined cloak fastened to his right shoulder, which marked him out as having been a royal judge.<sup>37</sup> Significantly Robert's monument is one of the earliest known depictions of a lay judge in his robes on a brass. There was a brass to the clerical justice Ralph Hengham (d. 1311) at Old St. Paul's Cathedral, London, but the next identifiable brass of a judge in his robes is the one commemorating Sir John Cassy (d. 1400), chief baron of the Exchequer, at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire (Fig. 3). Although a generation later in date, Cassy's effigy provides a good impression of what the robes on Robert's brass would have originally looked like. Much like Robert, Cassy is shown wearing a coif on his head and a mantle over his cassock.<sup>38</sup>

The brass of Robert II thus presents him as a knight, a chancellor and a judge. What this depiction reveals is that Robert or his executors did not see any problem in the fact that he was both a knight and a lawyer. Historians have suggested that many judges attempted to disguise the fact that they were lawyers because being a member of the legal profession was seen as incongruous with knightly status.<sup>39</sup> In the



Fig. 3. Brass of Sir John Cassy (d. 1400)  
Deerhurst, Glos. (LSW.I) (detail)

36 Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', pp. 46, 53-4.

37 J.H. Baker, 'A History of English Judges' Robes', *Costume*, XII (1978), pp. 27-9.

38 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 271-3.

39 A. Musson, *Medieval Law in Context: The Growth of Legal Consciousness from Magna Carta to the Peasants' Revolt* (Manchester, 2001), p. 62.



well known Scrope v. Grosvenor case at the Court of Chivalry in the 1380s, for example, it was reported that many had previously said that Sir Henry Scrope (d. 1336), a former chief justice, was not a gentleman because he was a king's justice.<sup>40</sup> Yet on Robert's brass his judicial career was seemingly something to be celebrated – or at the very least not concealed – alongside his status as a knight. Indeed, it may be that Robert's brass reflected a rise in the social confidence of lawyers and particularly royal judges. Whereas some lay judges in the fourteenth century, including Sir Henry Scrope at Easby Abbey, Yorkshire, and Sir Roger Hillary (d. 1356) at Walsall, Staffordshire, were commemorated by monuments displaying themselves in armour, from the middle of the fourteenth century lay judges tended to be depicted on their monuments in their judicial robes.<sup>41</sup> This change was in no small part due to the greater status afforded to royal judges at this time. By Edward III's reign it had become standard practice for royal justices to be made knights on their promotion to the bench, often receiving an annuity to help support their new status.<sup>42</sup> Following Robert II's appointment as chief justice in June 1356, for example, he was commanded by the king to become a knight and received a life-time grant of £40 a year from the Exchequer so 'that he may more decently maintain the order of knighthood'.<sup>43</sup> It can be argued then that by the time of Robert's death the judicial robes had come to denote knighthood almost as much as armour did.

Compared to Robert II's brass the second Thorpe monument recorded by Dugdale at

Peterborough was much more modest (Fig. 4).<sup>44</sup> It had no canopy and a single large shield in the centre, which presumably bore the family arms, lay in the place of an effigy. The Latin marginal inscription as recorded by Dugdale read:

Hic iacet ... /miles filius Domini Will(el)mi de Thorpe, qui mori(e)batur apud Tou'ton/ Wateruile die Jouis x<sup>o</sup> die/ Augusti anno domini Mill(esim)o CCC lxxv cuius anime propitietur deus.<sup>45</sup>

[Here lies ... knight, son of Sir William de Thorpe, who died at Orton Waterville on Thursday 10 August 1375. On whose soul may God have mercy]

Frustratingly, the name of the person it commemorated was already missing from the inscription in Dugdale's and Gunton's time. However, the brass is most likely to have commemorated Robert II's nephew, Robert III, son of his brother Sir William IV.<sup>46</sup> The date of death given on the inscription is 10 August 1375 and it is known that Robert III died shortly before October of that year.<sup>47</sup>

As with Robert II's brass, the inscription tells us that the commemorated was a knight. Yet the brass was much simpler and was undoubtedly less expensive. The difference is remarkable when it is considered that their deaths were only three years apart and that the two monuments originally lay alongside each other in the nave of the abbey church.<sup>48</sup> The overall impression is that Robert III, if it was him, was considered to have been less important than his uncle. A search of the records confirms this. Robert III

40 *The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry*, ed. N.H. Nicholas, 2 vols. (London, 1832), I, p. 181.

41 Baker, *The Order of Serjeants at Law*, pp. 70-2 & n. 4; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 274-5.

42 Musson, *Medieval Law in Context*, p. 62; A. Musson, 'Legal Culture: Medieval Lawyers' Aspirations and Pretensions', in *Fourteenth-Century England III*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 24-5.

43 *Cal. Pat. R. 1354-58*, p. 465.

44 BL, Add. MS 71474, f. 122.

45 BL, Add. MS 71474, f. 122. See also Gunton, *History of the Church of Peterburgh*, p. 93.

46 Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 41-2.

47 *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, XIV, no. 221.

48 Gunton, *History of the Church of Peterburgh*, p. 93.



Fig. 4. Lost brass of a member of the Thorpe family (d. 1375), Peterborough Cathedral (LSW.144) from Dugdale's Book of Monuments (BL, Add. MS 71474, f. 122) (Reproduced by permission of The British Library)

was certainly not as wealthy and almost nothing is known about his career. He was not a lawyer and he did not serve on any royal commissions. The only possible reference to any military service is a letter of protection granted in May 1373 to a Sir Robert Thorpe preparing to go overseas with John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps Robert III's life was cut short by the resurgence of the Black Death that struck England in 1374-75.<sup>50</sup> Whatever the case, his only claim to fame, as the inscription on his brass asserted, was that he was the son of Sir William Thorpe IV.

One possible reason why this brass only commemorated the deceased with a shield of arms (rather than an effigy) may then have been Robert III's apparent lack of any vocation. Although a knight, Robert had seen little or no military service. Nor could he claim to have been descended from any distinguished military ancestry as both his father and grandfather had been lawyers. Thus there would have been little justification for displaying him, warrior-like, in armour. Of course, not being a lawyer, he could not be shown in legal robes either. The only alternative would have been to display Robert in civilian attire, which would hardly have befitted someone who held a knighthood. In this instance, therefore, the simple shield of arms may have been used to represent someone of knightly rank but of no particular calling.

The only other thing remarkable about the second Thorpe brass is the inscription which not only mentions the date of the deceased's death

but also where he died: Orton Waterville, Huntingdonshire. As far as it can be ascertained, it was unusual for a monumental inscription to record the place of death.<sup>51</sup> Whereas the date of death on the inscription reminded the living to say prayers on the anniversary of the deceased's passing, the record of the place of death had a less obvious function. One possible explanation for its inclusion, in this case, however, may be that it was intended as a statement of lordship. The manor of Orton Waterville, situated three miles to the south-west of Peterborough, was one of the chief manors belonging to the Thorpe family and appears to have held some significance for them. Not only was Orton one of the major lordships in the Soke of Peterborough but up until the 1330s it had been the seat of the Watervilles of Orton Waterville, one of the most important families in the region.<sup>52</sup> Throughout the fourteenth century the Thorpes demonstrated a keen desire to emphasise their links with this distinguished family, who had been one of Thorpe family's lords from as early as the twelfth century.<sup>53</sup> Indeed it is likely that the Thorpe coat of arms were derived from those belonging to a branch of this family, the Watervilles of Marholm, which was: *Gules three fleur de lis argent a chief vair*.<sup>54</sup> It can be argued therefore that the mention of Orton Waterville on Robert's brass was an attempt to link the Thorpes with this manor and its previous owners the Watervilles. This ambition no doubt helps to explain William V's bequest of an annual grant of 10 marks to the former Waterville chantry at Orton Waterville in April 1391.<sup>55</sup>

49 TNA: PRO, C 76/56, m. 26. I am grateful to David Simpkin for this reference.

50 Ormrod, *Reign of Edward III*, p. 38.

51 I am grateful to Sally Badham and Nicholas Rogers for this point.

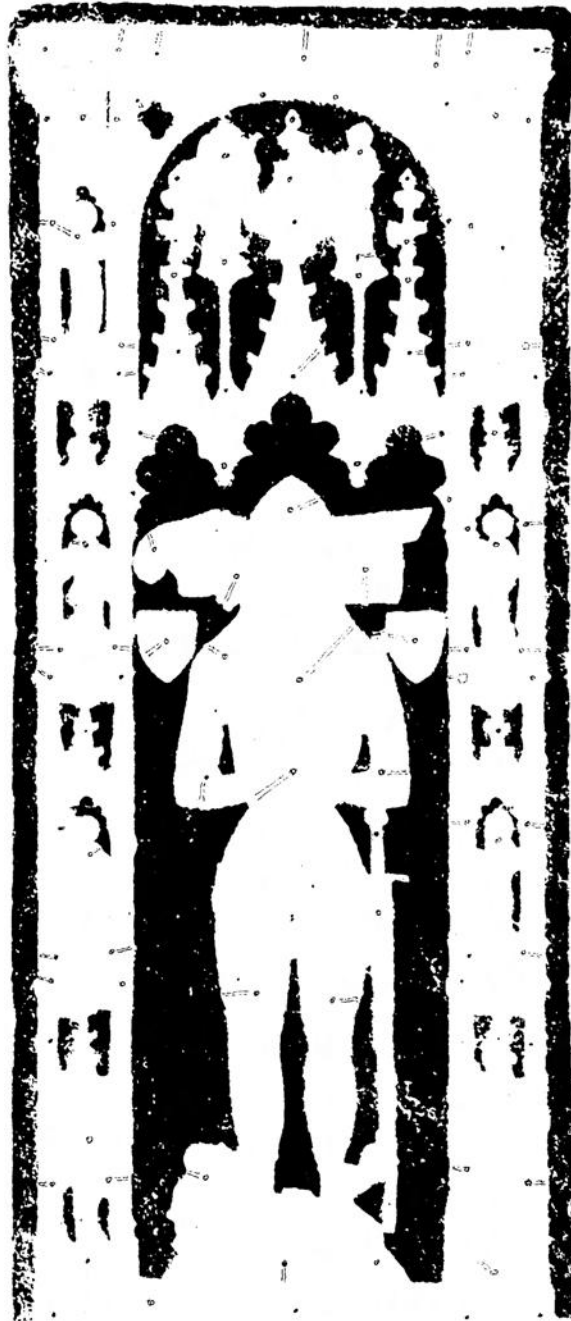
52 VCH, *Huntingdonshire*, III (London, 1936), pp. 198-203. For discussion of the Watervilles of Orton Waterville, see E. King, 'The Knights of Peterborough Abbey', *Peterborough's Past*, Peterborough Museum Soc., 2 (1986-87), pp. 36-50; *Complete Peerage*, ed. Cokayne,

XII, pt. 2, pp. 429-33.

53 Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 25-6, 30.

54 W.H. Lord, 'A Description of the Escutcheons', *Annual Report of the Peterborough Natural History, Scientific and Archaeological Soc.*, LIV (1926 for 1925), p. 63; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 278-80.

55 Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', pp. 46, 52.



*Fig. 5. Indent of the brass of Sir William Thorpe (d. 1391) Ely Cathedral (LSW.47)  
(from Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore)*



Fig. 6. Indent of the brass of Sir William Thorpe  
Ely Cathedral (detail)  
(photo.: author)



Fig. 7. Indent of the brass of Sir William Thorpe  
Ely Cathedral (detail)  
(photo.: author)

The third and final brass belonging to a member of the Thorpe family is that of Sir William V (d. 1391) at Ely Cathedral (Fig. 5). Although only the indent of William's brass remains it is clear that it was the most sophisticated of the three brasses. Cut in a Purbeck marble slab is the indent of a knight in late fourteenth-century armour, with a sword by his side (effigy, 1650 x 495 mm; composition, 2475 x 1070 mm; slab, 2705 x 1150 mm).<sup>56</sup> The knight's head rests on a helm, at his feet there is the indent for what would have been a lion, and on either side of the figure are the indents for two shields. Above William's effigy is the indent of a finely cusped triple canopy, the central arch being cinquefoiled whilst the two outer arches are trefoiled. Higher still is the indent of a round-arched super-canopy supporting an entablature with pierced quatrefoils in the spandrels, similar in design to the one on Robert II's brass. Both the canopy and super-canopy are supported on two richly decorated

side-shafts each containing four figures in canopied niches (Figs. 5, 6). Rising between the pinnacles of the triple canopy on slender brackets are the indents of two more figures facing each other, the left-hand one of which appears to have held a scroll (Fig. 7). The brass almost certainly had a marginal or foot inscription but this has been lost and is unrecorded.

Today the indent of the William's brass can be found in the north aisle of the presbytery in front of the steps to Bishop Alcock's chantry chapel, where it has laid since at least 1786.<sup>57</sup> Originally, however, the brass was positioned in a much more prominent location. The antiquaries John Stevens (1722) and Browne Willis (1730), in their respective plans of the cathedral, both place William's monument in the centre of the presbytery close to the site of St. Etheldreda's shrine, as per William's

<sup>56</sup> Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, pp. 116, 118, 120.

<sup>57</sup> R. Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, 2 vols. (London, 1786-96), I, p. 219; W. Stevenson,

*A Supplement to the Second Edition of Mr. Bentham's History and Antiquities of the Cathedral and Conventual Church of Ely* (Norwich, 1817), p. 139.

testamentary request.<sup>58</sup> The marble slab of William's monument was probably transferred to its current location sometime between 1768 and 1772 when the remaining tombstones in the presbytery were removed to the aisles in order to make way for the relocation of the medieval choir from the Octagon to the eastern end of the cathedral.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike his uncle, William left a much clearer idea about what he wanted for his burial. In his will, drawn up on 9 April 1391, William left his soul 'to Almighty God, the Blessed Mary and all the saints' and asked that he be buried in 'the cathedral church of Ely near the tomb of St. Etheldreda the Virgin', allocating £100 to cover his funeral expenses, as long as it was not considered to be too extravagant.<sup>60</sup> Yet, as before, it cannot be ascertained if William had any influence on the design of his brass. Whilst William stipulated at length how his wealth and possessions were to be distributed, his will makes no mention about the kind of monument that he wanted. Thus we cannot know if William had already made his wishes felt or left the design of his tomb entirely up to his executors, Sir Philip Tilney, Sir James Roos and Richard Wittlebury, Henry Hammond and John Pechell, clerks.<sup>61</sup>

As with the previous two brasses, William's brass shows a preoccupation with the display of

knightly status. At least one of the shields on either side of William's effigy would have borne the Thorpe coat of arms which again asserted his family's membership of the armigerous classes. The depiction of William V in armour, the conventional attire for representing a knight, likewise indicated his knightly credentials. The use of an armoured effigy was in stark contrast to the previous two brasses but in William's case his attire would not have presented any kind of dilemma as he was very much a 'miles strenuus in armis' – a fighting knight.

Whilst William may have originally been destined for a legal career like his father and uncle (in May 1356 a William Thorpe the younger, an apprentice of the Common Bench, was pardoned for causing the death of Hugh Lumbard) it is clear that his true calling was the military.<sup>62</sup> One of the earliest identifiable references to William V is as a member of Edward the Black Prince's retinue during the 1355-57 expedition to Aquitaine and it is quite possible that William fought at the battle of Poitiers (19 September 1356).<sup>63</sup> In 1363-64 William was again serving with the Black Prince in Aquitaine when Edward was receiving homage as Prince of Aquitaine and on 6 November 1367 he was retained for life by the Prince for an annual fee of £40 along with three other prominent household knights, Gerard Braybroke, John Golafre and Robert Roos.<sup>64</sup> In 1368-69, with the prospect of war with France again

58 J. Stevens, *The History of the Ancient Abbeys, Monasteries, Hospitals, Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, being two Additional volumes to Sir William Dugdale's Monasticon Anglicanum*, 2 vols. (London, 1722), I, p. 399; Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedrals of Lincoln, Ely, Oxford and Peterborough*, p. 332. See also P. Draper, 'Bishop Northwold and the Cult of Saint Etheldreda', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Ely Cathedral*, ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper (Leeds, 1979), pp. 13-14; M. Roberts, 'The Effigy of Bishop Hugh de Northwold in Ely Cathedral', *Burlington Magazine*, CXXX (1988), pp. 83-4.

59 T. Cocke, 'The Architectural History of Ely Cathedral from 1540-1840', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Ely Cathedral*, ed. Coldstream and Draper, p. 75;

P. Lindley, "'Carpenter's Gothic" and Gothic Carpentry: Contrasting Attitudes to the Restoration of the Octagon and Removals of the Choir at Ely Cathedral', *Architectural History*, XXX (1987), pp. 98-104, esp. p. 102.

60 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v.

61 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, ff. 380v-381.

62 *Cal. Pat. R. 1354-58*, p. 377.

63 H.J. Hewitt, *The Black Prince's Expedition of 1355-1357* (Manchester, 1958), p. 212; D.S. Green, 'The Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', *Medieval Prosopography*, XXI (2000), p. 150.

64 Green, 'Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', pp. 138, 150.

looming, William was amongst those who mustered at Northampton in preparation for another expedition to defend Aquitaine, bringing with him a small retinue of five esquires and six archers.<sup>65</sup> By the early 1370s, however, William had returned to England, perhaps with the Black Prince in January 1371, as he was appointed to a commission to maintain banks and ditches in Cambridgeshire in May 1373 and served as a justice of the peace, mainly in Northamptonshire, from 1374 onwards.<sup>66</sup>

Like many members of the Black Prince's household, William continued to perform conspicuous royal service after the Prince's death and during the early years of Richard II's reign.<sup>67</sup> Evidently favoured by the crown, by 1378 William had become one of the king's knights and in September of that year he was appointed keeper of the royal castle and forest of Rockingham, Northamptonshire. The following year William, described by the king as 'our dear and loyal knight', was made constable of Rockingham for life.<sup>68</sup> Further loyal service brought even greater reward. During the Peasants' Revolt of June 1381 he was appointed to commissions to suppress uprisings in Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire and, on 16 July, perhaps in recognition of his previous military service and his newly found importance as

a trusted local administrator in a time of crisis, he received his first personal summons to parliament whence he became a member of the parliamentary peerage for the remainder of his life.<sup>69</sup> With the decline in opportunities to perform military service in the 1380s William spent most of his remaining career as constable of Rockingham castle and a leading figure on local peace commissions.<sup>70</sup> Still William did see military action once more in the summer of 1385 when he took part in Richard II's ill-fated expedition into Scotland, leading a contingent of six esquires and nine archers, and in October 1386 he was amongst the leading knights and members of the king's household who mustered at London to defend the city from a threatened French invasion.<sup>71</sup>

Clearly then William was a trusted servant of the crown who had connections within the royal court and household. Evidently, though, William was not so close to Richard II's inner circle as to become a target in the purge of the king's household by the Lords Appellant during the Merciless Parliament of February-June 1388.<sup>72</sup> On the contrary, it appears that William was supportive of – or at least compliant with – the Lords Appellant as in March 1388 he was commissioned to receive oaths from the 'gentlest and ablest men' in Northamptonshire to side with the Appellants and to keep the

65 Green, 'Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', p. 150; TNA: PRO, E 101/29/24, m. 1.

66 *Cal. Pat. R. 1370-74*, p. 314; *Cal. Pat. R. 1374-77*, pp. 55, 135.

67 D.S. Green, 'The Later Retinue of Edward the Black Prince', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, XLIV (2000), pp. 150-51; *idem*, 'Politics and Service with Edward the Black Prince', in *The Age of Edward III*, ed. J.S. Bothwell (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 67-8.

68 *Cal. Fine R. 1377-83*, p. 109; *Cal. Pat. R. 1377-81*, pp. 407; S.M. Mitchell, 'Some Aspects of the Knightly Household of Richard II' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1998), p. 25 & n. 65.

69 *Cal. Pat. R. 1381-85*, pp. 69-71; *Reports from the Lords Committees Touching the Dignity of a Peer of the Realm*, 5 vols.

(London, 1829), IV, pp. 688-94; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 171-6.

70 *Cal. Pat. R. 1381-85*, pp. 84, 85, 138-39, 141, 201, 244-7, 252, 254, 255, 357, 358, 505, 600; *Cal. Pat. R. 1385-89*, p. 168, 545; *Cal. Pat. R. 1389-92*, pp. 136, 138, 343.

71 N.B. Lewis, 'The Last Medieval Summons of the English Feudal Levy, 13 June 1385', *English Historical Review*, LXXIII (1958), p. 18; TNA: PRO, E 403/515, m. 8; J. Sherborne, 'The Defence of the Realm and the Impeachment of Michael de la Pole in 1386', in *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. J. Taylor and W. Childs (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 106-08; N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp. 154-5.

72 Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 191-5.



Fig. 8. The Thorpe family arms and crest in William Thorpe's copy of Giles of Rome, *De Regimine Principum* (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Bodley 234, f. 1)  
(Reproduced by permission of the Bodleian Library)

peace.<sup>73</sup> Despite his acquiescence, however, William does not seem to have lost any favour with the crown and he continued to serve on local commissions and as constable of Rockingham right up to his death in April 1391.<sup>74</sup>

Returning to William's brass, one distinctive feature that helps to associate him further with the military and courtly elite of the late fourteenth century is the indent of his helm, the outline of which reveals that it once bore a crest.<sup>75</sup> Whilst the crest has long since disappeared, evidence elsewhere shows it to have been a bearded Saracen's head wearing a Phrygian cap. The first folio of William Thorpe's copy of Giles of Rome, *De Regimine Principum*, for example, has a decorated border incorporating the family coat of arms and a helm with the Saracen's head crest (Fig. 8).<sup>76</sup> This same crest can also be found on the



Fig. 9. Thorpe family crest on the tomb of Sir John Wittlebury (d. 1400), Marholm, Northants.  
(photo.: author)

sculpted tomb of Sir John Wittlebury, William's adopted heir, at Marholm, Northamptonshire (Fig. 9).<sup>77</sup> Nigel Saul has recently suggested that heraldic crests, particularly those displayed on fourteenth-century monuments may have been

73 *Cal. Close R. 1385-89*, pp. 406-407; see also N. Saul, 'The Sussex Gentry and the Oath to uphold the Acts of the Merciless Parliament', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, CXXXV (1997), p. 223.

74 *Cal. Pat. R. 1389-92*, pp. 136, 138, 343; Kinsey, 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement', pp. 177-80.

75 J.A. Goodall, 'Heraldry Depicted on Brasses', in *Monumental Brasses as Art and History*, ed. J. Bertram (Stroud, 1996), p. 48.

76 Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Bodley 234, f. 1.

77 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 228.



representations of knights' actual helms worn as disguises during courtly tournaments. What is more, he notes a preponderance of Saracen's head crests, a popular motif in mid-fourteenth century *hastiludes*, on tombs of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, which may point to the one-time existence of a 'Saracen' tourneying team at court entertainments.<sup>78</sup> If William Thorpe was a member of any such team he would have been in illustrious company. Other fourteenth-century knights known to have used Saracen's heads as their crests included John de Vere (d. 1360), Earl of Oxford, Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361), Sir Miles Stapleton (d. 1364), John, Lord Willoughby of Eresby (d. 1372), John, Lord Chandos (d. 1370) and John, Lord Bouchier (d. 1400). As well as being important figures at court, these men all had distinguished military careers and indeed five – Bouchier, Cobham, Chandos, Willoughby and Vere – had, like William, served in the Black Prince's expedition of 1355-57.<sup>79</sup> Regardless of whether William was a member of any Saracen team, the display of a crested helm on his brass does at least associate him with the courtier knights of the late fourteenth century, many of whom were similarly depicted with crested helms on their funerary monuments.<sup>80</sup>

Another aspect of William's monument that connects him with the courtly elite is the style of the brass, which was another product of the London B workshop. As has already been noted in relation to Robert II's brass, London B was

particularly favoured by those linked with the royal court in the late fourteenth century. Indeed several of the knights within Richard II's household were commemorated by brasses from this workshop.<sup>81</sup> One notable example was the London B style brass at Westminster Abbey commemorating Sir John Golafre (d. 1396), one of Richard II's closest chamber knights and perhaps the same John Golafre (or at least a relative of his) who was retained for life by the Black Prince with William in November 1367.<sup>82</sup>

Yet as well as William's courtly connections his brass also reveals something about his religious concerns and particularly his need for salvation through intercession. Judging from the indents of the pair of figures rising between the pinnacles of the triple canopy it appears that their brass inlays originally represented the Archangel Gabriel's annunciation to the Virgin Mary (Fig. 7). A popular motif on medieval brasses and in art, the Annunciation to the Virgin provided a symbolic representation of the Ave Maria, a prayer asking for the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the opening line of which – 'Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee' – was derived from Gabriel's greeting to Mary in St. Luke's Gospel (Luke 1.28).<sup>83</sup> This allusion was no doubt reinforced on the brass by the scroll carried by Gabriel (on the left), on which would have been inscribed the first words of the text. What is more, it can be assumed that the eight figures in the niches of the side-shafts, who appear to have had halos, originally represented saints interceding

78 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 228-30.

79 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 228; Hewitt, *The Black Prince's Expedition of 1355-1357*, pp. 198, 200, 213, 214; M. Jones, 'The Fortunes of War: The Military Career of John, Second Lord Bouchier (d. 1400)', *Essex Archaeology and History*, XXVI (1995), pp. 145-61.

80 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 229.

81 Saul, 'The Fragments of the Golafre Brass in Westminster Abbey', pp. 21, 30-2.

82 Saul, 'The Fragments of the Golafre Brass in Westminster Abbey', pp. 19-32. There were, however, several John Golafres alive in the fourteenth century, see *House of Commons, 1386-1421*, ed. Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, III, p. 199.

83 A. van Dijk, 'The Angelic Salutation in Early Byzantine and Medieval Annunciation Imagery', *Art Bulletin*, LXXXI, no. 3 (1999), pp. 420-36; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 170-1.

on the behalf of the deceased, guiding William's soul through Purgatory and into Heaven (Fig. 6).<sup>84</sup>

The use of saints in the side-shafts was a comparatively rare feature on brasses of the laity in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Apart from William's brass there are twenty other known brasses or indents which have saints in the side-shafts dating to the period *c.* 1370-1420. Of these, only eight commemorate members of laity, the remainder being all to members of the higher clergy.<sup>85</sup> One possible inspiration for their use on William's brass however may have been some of the other funerary monuments located in the eastern arm of Ely Cathedral. The brass of Bishop John Barnet (d. 1373), for example, much like William's brass, had a triple canopy and super-canopy with saints in the side-shafts.<sup>86</sup> The sculpted effigy of Bishop Hugh de Northwold (d. 1254), who was responsible for building the presbytery in which William's tomb was located, was also flanked by figures some of whom represented saints.<sup>87</sup> Other monuments located in the vicinity included those of Bishop John Ketton (d. 1316), whose brass featured figures in the side-shafts that may have represented saints, and Bishop John Hotham (d. 1337), whose tomb chest was surrounded by figures of the Apostles.<sup>88</sup> Another influence may have been the popularity of the cult of saints in

the late fourteenth century and particularly amongst Richard II and his court.<sup>89</sup> The London B style brass at Westminster Abbey commemorating Bishop John Waltham (d. 1395), one of Richard II's favourite administrators, for example, had a canopy very similar in design to that on William's brass. Although slightly later in date, Waltham's brass again depicted the deceased beneath a triple canopy and round-arched super-canopy supported on two side-shafts each containing the figures of four saints within canopied niches.<sup>90</sup> Yet William's brass was not merely an unthinking copy of other monuments or contemporary fashions. The inclusion of the saints and the depiction of the Annunciation on William's brass clearly echoed his own testamentary request for his soul to be left to 'the Blessed Mary and all the saints'.<sup>91</sup>

The distinctive canopy of William's brass may also reveal something about his connections away from Ely and the royal court. William's brass bears a striking resemblance to the brass of a lady in the south aisle of St. Mary Magdelene's church, Gedney in Lincolnshire (Fig. 10). Dated to *c.* 1390 the Gedney brass is clearly from the same London B workshop and as with William's monument it had a cusped triple canopy, a depiction of the Annunciation and a round-arched super-canopy with quatrefoils in the spandrels, all of which was

84 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, p. 168.

85 Badham, 'Patterns of Patronage', pp. 450-2.

86 Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, p. 116.

87 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 178-80; Roberts, 'The Effigy of Bishop Hugh de Northwold in Ely Cathedral', pp. 80-2.

88 N. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments, 1270-1350', in *The Earliest English Brasses: Patronage, Style and Workshops, 1270-1350*, ed. J. Coales (London, 1987), pp. 26-7, 47; Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, pp. 116-17. Nicholas Rogers suggests that the figures on Ketton's brass represented praying monks, Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments', p. 27.

89 S. Mitchell, 'Richard II: Kingship and the Cult of Saints', in *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, ed. D. Gordon, L. Monnas, and C. Elam (London, 1997), pp. 115-24; Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 308-11, 323-6; N. Saul, *The Three Richards: Richard I, Richard II and Richard III*, 2nd edn. (London, 2006), pp. 171-6.

90 J. Dart, *Westminster, or The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St Peter's, Westminster*, 2 vols. (London, 1742), II, p. 46; J.S.N. Wright, *The Brasses of Westminster Abbey* (London, 1972), pp. 9-11; N. Saul, 'Richard II and Westminster Abbey', in *The Cloister and the World: Essays in Medieval History in Honour of Barbara Harvey*, ed. J. Blair and B. Golding (Oxford, 1996), pp. 210-11.

91 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v.

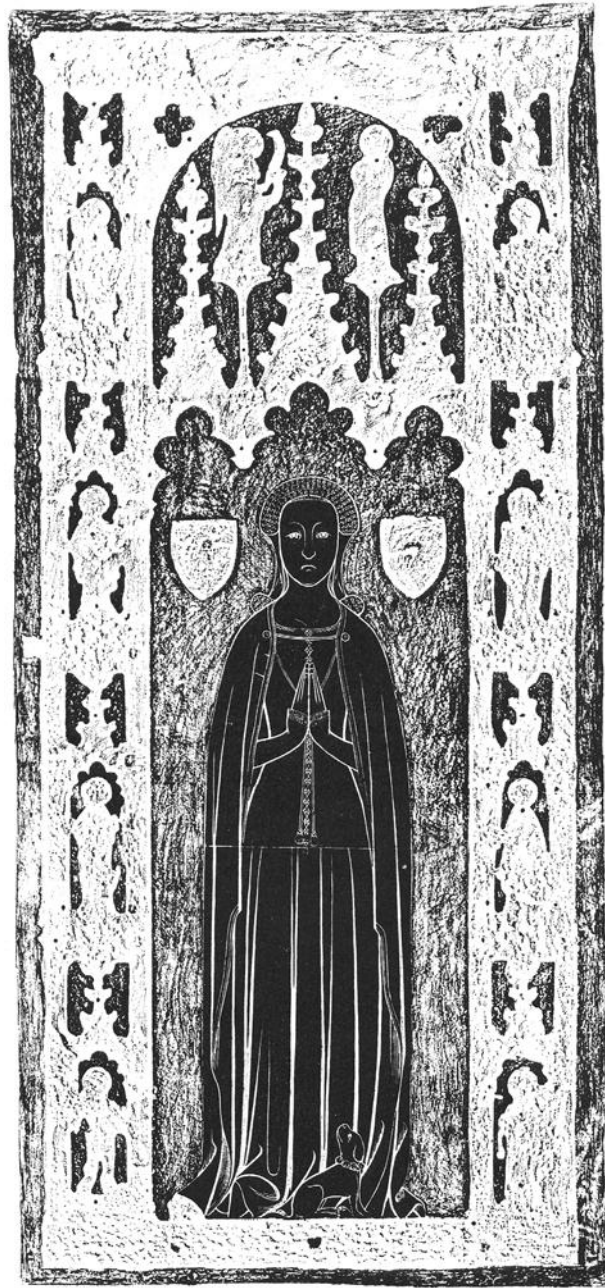


Fig. 10. Brass of an unknown lady (c. 1390), Gedney, Lincs.(M.S.IV)  
(M.W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society, 1894-1984*  
(Woodbridge, 1988), no. 70)

supported on side-shafts each containing the figures of four saints within canopied niches. The only notable difference between the two brasses, apart from the effigies and the dog at the lady's feet, is a slight variation in the size of the Gedney monument (effigy, 1543 x 525 mm; composition, 2576 mm x 1118 mm; slab, 2667 x 1251 mm). The identity of the lady depicted on the brass is unrecorded but she was most likely a member of the Lincolnshire branch of the Roos family who held considerable amounts of property in Gedney in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>92</sup>

One explanation for the similarity between these two brasses, of course, may be that the two families simply happened to choose the same product from the same fashionable workshop. Yet such a close resemblance is unlikely to have been just coincidence. As has been shown elsewhere, it was not uncommon for families connected to each other by ties of friendship or kinship to choose monuments of a similar style and design.<sup>93</sup> Sally Badham, for example, has shown that in the late fifteenth century members of the Bouchier-Cromwell kinship group commissioned brasses of similar designs from the same London 'D' workshop.<sup>94</sup> A similar phenomenon may well be observable in the present case as documentary evidence reveals that the Roos and Thorpe families were indeed closely associated with each other. Robert Roos of Gedney, for example, is found

serving with William V on commissions of array in Lincolnshire in the 1370s and 80s.<sup>95</sup> The two men are likely to have known each other well before this, however, as a Robert Roos, who was probably the same man, was serving in the Black Prince's household from at least 1355-57.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Roos was retained for life by the Black Prince on the very same occasion as William V on 6 November 1367.<sup>97</sup> Evidently, service together in the household of the Black Prince and on local commissions forged a high degree of trust and friendship between the two men as Robert is found acting as one of William's feoffees from 1373.<sup>98</sup> This friendship extended to other members of the Roos family as another one of William's feoffees from 1373 until 1391 was Sir James Roos (d. 1403).<sup>99</sup> William and James were clearly very close as William later left James a legacy of 10 marks in his will and named him as one of his executors.<sup>100</sup> As has already been established, William's executors are likely to have had a major role in the commissioning of his funerary monument. It can be argued therefore that the similarity between the two monuments is due to it having been James himself who selected the design of both William's brass and the one commemorating his relative at Gedney. Certainly James was one of the most active of William's executors after 1391 and his name often appeared first when the executors were listed together on any documentation.<sup>101</sup> What is more, James held a significant sway over the

92 *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, Second Series, XIII (1889-91), pp. 212-14; K. Major, *A Short Account of the Church of St. Mary Magdalen, Gedney* (Gloucester, 1968), p. 6; *MBS Bulletin*, no. 114 (May 2010), p. 277.

93 Saul, 'The Fragments of the Golafre Brass in Westminster Abbey', pp. 30-2; Badham, 'Patterns of Patronage', p. 423; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 102-104.

94 Badham, 'Patterns of Patronage', p. 423-52.

95 *Cal. Pat. R. 1374-77*, pp. 496-7; *Cal. Pat. R. 1377-81*, pp. 38, 471-2; Green, 'The Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', pp. 138, 150.

96 Hewitt, *The Black Prince's Expedition of 1355-1357*, p. 210; Green, 'The Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', p. 150.

97 Green, 'The Military Personnel of Edward the Black Prince', pp. 138, 150.

98 Northamptonshire Record Office (hereafter NRO), F(M) Charter/1317; F(M) Roll/51, m. 1; F(M) Roll/52, m. 1.

99 NRO, F(M) Charters/1317, 921, 1521-25; *Records of Some Sessions of the Peace in Lincolnshire, 1381-1396*, ed. E.G. Kimball, 2 vols., Lincoln Record Soc., 49, 56 (Hereford, 1955), I, p. xxviii.

100 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, ff. 380v-381.

101 *Cal. Pat. R. 1396-98*, p. 30; NRO, F(M) Charters/1197, 1199, 1930.

patronage of the church at Gedney; he was one of the holders of the advowson from at least 1393 and in 1399 he presented John Pechell, another of William's executors, as rector.<sup>102</sup>

Yet there may have been even more cause for the similarities between William's brass and the Gedney brass. Further evidence suggests a familial connection between the Roos and Thorpe families. The heraldic arms of the Thorpe family and those of the Roos family (*Gules three water bougets ermine*) can still be found on escutcheons on either side of the west window of the parish church of Maxey, Northamptonshire, one of the chief manors belonging to the Thorpes.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, the stained glass windows of the south aisle of the church at Gedney once incorporated five shields, two of which bore the arms of the Roos and Thorpe families.<sup>104</sup> More significantly, the once impressive armorial glazing scheme at the church of Ashby St. Ledgers, Northamptonshire, included a shield of arms showing the arms of the Thorpe family impaling those of the Roos family.<sup>105</sup> The arms of Thorpe impaling Roos were also displayed in the windows of the chapel above the Divinity School at Cambridge University which had been established by William's executors in the 1390s to commemorate the souls of Sir William and his wife Lady Grace.<sup>106</sup> In light of the heraldic evidence therefore, the close resemblance of the two brasses may be interpreted as a deliberate display of kinship between the two families. Indeed, it is well worth speculating that the

Gedney brass did in fact commemorate William's wife Grace, whose family origins and burial location are unrecorded. That Grace was not buried alongside her husband was by no means unusual for the Middle Ages as wives were often interred with their natal family.<sup>107</sup> Intriguingly, William asked in his will for 'the final wish' of his deceased wife to be fulfilled.<sup>108</sup> Was this a reference to her funerary monument at Gedney?

The final point that can be made about William's brass relates to its location next to the shrine of St. Etheldreda at Ely. The fact that William asked to be buried in the sacred heart of the cathedral, away from his main estates in Northamptonshire and the tombs of his family at Peterborough Abbey, and that his extraordinary request was granted, suggests that he not only had some influential connections at Ely but also a strong affinity with the church. This conclusion is confirmed by a study of the records which reveals that William was closely affiliated to Thomas Arundel (d. 1414), bishop of Ely from 1374 to 1388. William was receiving robes from Arundel from at least November 1381 and he was a regular guest at several of the bishop's manors.<sup>109</sup> A further indication of the strength of this relationship can be found in William's will where he mentions a breviary that he had received from 'a former bishop of Ely', who was in all probability Arundel.<sup>110</sup> It is not unreasonable to suggest therefore that it was Arundel who helped to acquire William's burial spot. Despite his

102 Major, *A Short Account of the Church of St. Mary Magdalen, Gedney*, p. 17.

103 J.T. Irvine, 'Maxey Church', *Northamptonshire Notes and Queries*, III (1889), p. 75; VCH, *Northamptonshire*, II (London, 1906), pp. 502-07.

104 *Lincolnshire Church Notes made by Gervase Holles, A.D. 1634 to A.D. 1642*, ed. R.E.G. Cole, Lincolnshire Record Soc., 1 (London, 1911), p. 179; P. Hebgin-Barnes, *The Medieval Stained Glass of the County of Lincolnshire* (Oxford, 1996), p. 99.

105 'Appendix: The church notes for Ashby St Ledgers 1590-1721' transcribed and annotated by J.A. Goodall, in *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers*, ed. Bertram, pp. 93, 97.

106 H.P. Stokes, *The Chaplains and the Chapel of the University of Cambridge (1256-1568)*, Publications of the Cambridge Antiquarian Soc., Octavo Series, 41 (Cambridge, 1906), pp. 49-51, 56.

107 P. Coss, *The Foundations of Gentry Life: The Multons of Frampton and their World, 1270-1370* (Oxford, 2010), p. 163.

108 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 381.

109 M. Aston, *Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 199-202, 232, 233 n. 1.

110 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v; Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p. 202.

high-profile connections, though, William still had to pay a substantial burial fee to secure such an exclusive location. According to Browne Willis, William gave over £92 worth of plate to the convent in order to be buried next to the shrine and in his will he bequeathed the advowson of the church at Lolworth, Cambridgeshire, to the cathedral priory.<sup>111</sup>

The question remains as to why William was buried beneath a lavish monument in such a pre-eminent location. One possible explanation is William's elevation to the parliamentary peerage in 1381 and his desire to cement his family's position within the ranks of the nobility. When William made his will he can hardly have been unaware of the high esteem that such an exclusive burial spot carried. It was rare for even established members of the nobility to be buried within a cathedral church whilst burial next to a shrine of a saint was an even greater privilege normally reserved for bishops.<sup>112</sup> Thus by choosing to be buried here William was perhaps trying to demonstrate, one last time, that he was someone of great importance and worthy of the peerage that he had attained.<sup>113</sup> Another factor is likely to have been William's place as the last surviving member of his family. Studies elsewhere have shown that families facing extinction often opted for sumptuous monuments in prominent locations in order to provide a lasting memorial to their name and lineage.<sup>114</sup> William was no exception and his anxiety to preserve the family's legacy is clearly

shown in this will where he bequeathed three of his manors to Sir John Wittlebury on the condition that Wittlebury adopted the Thorpe arms.<sup>115</sup> Of course the one benefit of being the last in the line was that William was free to spend as much as he wanted on his own commemoration without having to worry about the need to provide for any descendants.

Yet not everything was about status and the family legacy. Most important of all was William's need for intercession. As the last member of his family, William would naturally have worried that there would be no-one left to remember him and pray for his soul. Part of William's solution to his dilemma was to establish a large number of chantries and obits in the churches and religious houses close to his estates.<sup>116</sup> However, for his final resting place William chose to be buried next to the shrine of St. Etheldreda where he would receive the additional spiritual benefits of being interred next to a saint. It was commonly believed that burial *ad sanctos* imbued the deceased with some of the saint's grace and that the saint would serve as an advocate for the deceased at the Last Judgement.<sup>117</sup> What is more by choosing to be buried next to an important, and much visited, shrine William ensured that a large number of people would come across his tomb and be prompted to pray for his soul. If this was indeed William's intention then he chose well. Ely was a major pilgrimage centre in the Middle Ages and at the time of William's death the cult of St. Etheldreda was near the height of

111 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v; Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedrals of Lincoln, Ely, Oxford and Peterborough*, p. 351; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, IX (Oxford, 1989), p. 162; Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', p. 49. The sacrist rolls also recorded a payment of 13s. 4d. from William's executors to have two wax candles burnt at his tomb in the year of his death (Stevenson, *A Supplement to the Second Edition of Mr. Bentham's History and Antiquities of the Cathedral and Conventual Church of Ely*, p. 139).

112 Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 117-18.

113 Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', p. 49.

114 B. Gittos and M. Gittos, 'Motivation and Choice: The Selection of Medieval Secular Effigies', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. Coss and Keen, pp. 144-5; Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages*, pp. 132-6.

115 LAO, Episcopal Register XII, f. 380v.

116 See Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', pp. 40-57.

117 E. Johnson, 'Burial ad Sanctos', in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. L.J. Taylor et al. (Leiden, 2010), pp. 68-70.

its popularity, attracting hundreds of visitors to her shrine each year.<sup>118</sup>

Of course, we should not discount the likelihood of William's own devotion to the saint. One incident that William is likely to have been aware of, and perhaps even witnessed, was the miraculous cure of Sir James Berners at St. Etheldreda's shrine in the summer of 1383. Whilst Richard II and his entourage were staying at Ely, Berners, one of his closest chamber knights, was struck by lightning during a thunderstorm leaving him 'blind and half crazed.' The king subsequently ordered all the clergy to process to St. Etheldreda's shrine and to pray for his recovery. Later Berners himself was brought before the shrine where he suffered a terrifying vision of the judgement of his soul but in which he was ultimately saved by the intercession of St. Etheldreda and St. John the Evangelist. Following this apparition Berners' sight and sanity were restored.<sup>119</sup> Whether this event had any influence at all on William's decision to be buried next to the shrine it is impossible to say. However, William undoubtedly regarded St. Etheldreda as one of his principal patrons on the road to salvation.

What then do the Thorpe brasses tell us about the family as a whole? As with other knightly families, particularly less established ones, they were keen to emphasize their knightly credentials, primarily through the use of heraldry but also through their inscriptions and their attire. Another quality that was evidently important to the Thorpes was that of service. Robert II's brass in particular sought to portray

him as a royal servant *extraordinaire*. William V's military attire and heraldic crest similarly commemorated his service in the king's wars and his connections to the courtly elite. The very style of their brasses, London B, also associated them with the royal court. Yet through the location of their brasses the family also highlighted their service to the great religious houses of Peterborough and Ely. Prevailing over their desire to commemorate their status and achievements, though, was their need, especially in the case of William V, to secure their salvation through intercession. Perhaps what is most revealing about the Thorpe brasses, however, is their (or their executors') nuanced understanding of the concept of 'degree', one's position within the social hierarchy. Whilst all three of the Thorpes were knights they were depicted on their brasses in strikingly different ways, each reflecting their particular stations in life. What this affirms is the ardent belief in the Middle Ages that men and women should present themselves, both in life and in death, accurately according to their degree.<sup>120</sup>

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118 B. Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 154-6, 235; D. Owen, 'Ely 1109-1539: Priory, Community and Town', in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. Meadows and Ramsay, pp. 67-70; V. Blanton, *Signs of Devotion: The Cult of Aethelthryth in Medieval England, 695-1615* (University Park, PA, 2007), p. 248; Kinsey, 'Location of Commemoration in Late Medieval England', pp. 49-50.

119 *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394*, ed. L.C. Hector and B.F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), pp. 42-3; *House of*

*Commons, 1386-1421*, ed. Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, II, pp. 205-208.

120 S. Badham, 'Status and Salvation: The Design of Medieval English Brasses and Incised Slabs', *MBS Trans.*, XV, pt. 5 (1996), p. 429; Saul, 'Bold as Brass', pp. 185-6; F. Lachaud, 'Dress and Social Status in England before the Sumpuary Laws', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. Coss and Keen, pp. 105-23.

# Embellishment and Restoration: the Barttelots and their Brasses at Stopham, Sussex

Jerome Bertram

*The sequence of brasses at Stopham, Sussex, commissioned by members of the Barttelot family runs from the fifteenth to the twentieth century. Of particular interest are the seventeenth-century embellishments and repairs, most executed by Edward Marshall. These are identified and distinguished from the nineteenth-century restorations, and their heraldic and genealogical rationale is discussed.*

There are few churches in Europe where a collection of brasses and wall-tablets to a single family runs from 1427 to 1985, with no sign that the series has yet ended. The main series of brasses commemorates Barttelots from 1428 to 1644, incorporating genuine medieval work, seventeenth-century embellishments by Walter Barttelot (d. 1640), and nineteenth-century restorations, by his descendent George Smyth Barttelot, (1788-1872). It is not always easy to establish which parts were made when, and previous analyses have been slightly faulty, but they survive as the most outstanding example anywhere of a single family's concern for its ancestry and interest in its monuments. The only comprehensive account of the brasses hitherto published was in 1939 by Mrs. Davidson-Houston in her series on Sussex Monumental Brasses.<sup>1</sup> This contains much useful genealogical material, but does not attempt to distinguish styles of engraving. While acknowledging the later date of the first two brasses, and the obvious seventeenth-century improvements, she failed to realise that some other repairs and restorations were not made until the mid nineteenth century, an omission

made also by Mill Stephenson, and even Malcolm Norris.<sup>2</sup>

## THE BARTTELOT FAMILY

It cannot really be claimed that the name of Barttelot has been known in Stopham since before the Conquest. Indeed they only arrived in the village in the late fourteenth century, with the marriage of John Barttelot of East Preston to Joan, the heiress of the de Stopham family, who were indeed there long before. Some accounts claim that one Brian de Stopham was in the Conqueror's army, and even accompanied by Adam de Barttelot as esquire at the battle of Hastings, although another tradition asserts that the family were originally Stoppa and were the eponymous Saxon founders of the village. In 1338 John Stopham was Knight of the Shire for Sussex in Parliament. A pedigree of Barttelot exists, drawn up by the indomitable Sir William Segar, Garter King of Arms (d. 1633), which fills in the centuries between Hastings and the fourteenth century, but of this J. H. Round objects: 'It is worse than useless to endeavour to modernise an old pedigree, dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, by combining it with ... modern genealogy. ... The old heraldic pedigrees cannot stand the strain.'<sup>3</sup>

In the later centuries we are on firmer ground, and there is no need to doubt the essential correctness of the descent from Adam Barttelot, noted in 1296 as of Kingston and East Preston. Since then the succession runs prettily well

1 Mrs. C.E.D. Davidson-Houston, 'Sussex Monumental Brasses. Part V', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter *SAC*), LXXX (1939), pp. 93-109.

2 M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (London, 1926, repr. 1964), pp. 515-16; M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols. (London, 1977), I, p. 280.

3 J.H. Round, 'The Stophams, the Zouches, and the Honour of Petworth', *SAC* LV (1912), p. 19. The pedigree is printed in C. J. Robinson, 'Stopham' (from materials contributed by Sir Walter Barttelot Barttelot Bart, M.P.), *SAC*, XXVII (1877), pp. 37-68.



unbroken from father to son, or at most uncle to nephew, to the present day. The name has been variously spelt, from Bartelot to Bartelet, Bertlet, Bartelot, and Barttelot, briefly Smyth (though doubtless pronounced Barttelot), then Barttelot Smyth, Smyth Barttelot, Barttelot Barttelot (Bart.), and now de Stopham Barttelot. It is pronounced as spelt, though in the early twentieth century was commonly sounded Bart'let. The present head of the family takes a close interest in the church, of which he is warden, and its monuments. It was hoped that the archives of Stopham House might include documents on the making of the brasses, contracts and receipts from Messrs. D and Sub-B, as well as Johnson and Marshall, but alas no such documents have been found. I am grateful to Lt. Col. Sir Brian Barttelot, 5th Baronet de Stopham, for generously searching in the archives for this purpose, and for his interest in the compilation of this article, which has been the occasional labour of many years, from my first brass-rubbing visit to Stopham in January 1962.

#### MARSHALL'S INTERVENTION

The most significant intervention in the brasses must have been made between 1630 and 1644. Walter Barttelot (Fig. 1) employed Edward Marshall (later Master Mason to the Crown), who not only made the finest brass in the collection, that to Richard Barttelot (d. 1614) and his two wives, but also added to the earlier ones. These brasses are of the highest quality, and from the most prestigious workshop in London.<sup>4</sup> The Marshall style is instantly recognisable, with rather prominent eyes and chubby cheeks, and the lettering is consistent, with both the E and S sloping from left to right. There were several families in the 1620s and 1630s who commissioned the Marshall workshop to produce brasses to reinforce their



*Fig. 1. Walter Barttelot, (d. 1640)  
shown as a son on his father's brass  
(rubbing: author, 2009)*

newly acquired or enhanced status. In some cases existing brasses were modified – for instance at Cuxham in Oxfordshire the 1507 brass to John Gregory was embellished by Marshall with an achievement of arms after the Gregory family had been granted arms in 1634. In other cases brasses were simply fabricated, producing plausible evidence to back up a totally spurious pedigree. An outrageous case is the brass at Rugeley, Staffs., made in the 1630s but imitating an earlier style. It purports to

<sup>4</sup> For Marshall's work on brasses, see Norris, *Memorials*, I, pp. 242-6.

commemorate John Weston, 1566, who was probably not even a real ancestor of Richard Weston, Earl of Portland. Other monuments, effigies and wall tablets, were fabricated at the same time to go with a splendid but totally fraudulent Weston pedigree drawn up by Sir William Segar, Garter King of Arms.<sup>5</sup> Segar was also involved in the well-known Dering family brasses at Pluckley, Kent. Here there were probably some genuine ancestors, and a few bits of genuine brass, but the collection now visible is an elaborate forgery, extending to indents for parts supposed to be missing but which in fact never existed.<sup>6</sup>

The Stopham series is different. Sir William Segar and Edward Marshall were certainly involved, but in this case the pedigree seems to be perfectly authentic, at least from the fourteenth century onwards, and the earlier brasses are indeed genuinely medieval. Nor was any attempt made to disguise the fact that the additions were seventeenth-century. What Marshall did was to enhance the medieval brasses to the three marshals of the Earls of Arundel with shields of arms, all correctly marshalled, and with groups of children shown in the dress of the 1630s. Two completely new brasses, also from the Marshall workshop, commemorate Walter Barttelot's wife Mary (d. 1626), and his daughter Elizabeth Mille (d. 1644). Neither had figures of the commemorated, but the inscription to Mary Barttelot has a plate showing her six daughters. Another plate of children from the Marshall workshop is now associated with two stray and incorrect shields, but as will be shown the children probably belong to John Barttelot

(d. 1493), and the shields may be rejected trial engravings.

At the same period, the church was given new stained glass windows, armorial glass in the east window, securely dated 1638, and figurative glass to illustrate the family pedigree in the nave. The building was presumably restored and made weather-tight at the same period.

Walter Barttelot himself, who died in 1640, has no contemporary memorial. Whether he had exhausted the funds available, or the impending civil war distracted the family's attention, he had to wait until the mid nineteenth century for a brass inscription. At the same time an inscription was made for his first cousin and heir, Henry Barttelot (d. 1648). Almost certainly it was about that time that a few repairs were made to the earlier brasses, three new heads and some pieces of inscription. All this was probably the work of George Smyth Barttelot, who also restored the stained glass windows, inserting the date 1853, and continued the maintenance of the church, succeeded in this by his son Sir Walter, the first Baronet.

#### HERALDIC DIFFICULTIES

There remains a question about the proper coat of arms of the mediaeval Barttelot family. The only seal in the British Museum collection shows John Barttelot II sealing with the arms usually attributed to Stopham, *Quarterly per fess indented argent and gules, four crescents counterchanged*, and the same arms also appear for Barttelot in a fifteenth-century manuscript in the College of Arms.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, several medieval sources give the Stopham arms as *Argent a bend sable*.<sup>8</sup> It is

5 J. Bertram, 'The Weston Brass at Rugeley, Staffordshire', *Antiquaries Jnl*, LXXII (1992), pp. 181-3.

6 R.H. D'Elboux, 'The Dering Brasses', *Antiquaries Jnl*, XXVII (1947), pp. 11-23.

7 T. Woodcock and S. Flower, *Dictionary of British Arms: Medieval Ordinary*, III (London, 2009), p. 96, citing W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts*

*in the British Museum*, II (London, 1892), no. 7162, p. 465, and College of Arms MS M. 10, f. 107, 2. (For the blazon of all the shields mentioned in this article, see the Armorial at the end.)

8 D.H.B. Chesshyre and T. Woodcock Flower, *Dictionary of British Arms: Medieval Ordinary*, I (London, 1992), pp. 322, 323, 349, 362, 369.

possible that the arms regularly used by the Barttelots in the Middle Ages was the crescent coat, for collateral branches of the family were using them much later. The Barttlets of Gloucestershire were recorded in the 1623 Visitation as using the crescents, with the crest of a *pheasant proper*. Nine previous generations are given, implying that the families separated some centuries before. The same arms were recorded in Worcestershire in 1569.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the Barttlets of Devon bore a rather complicated variation on the arms with three gloves, also incorporating crescents; they remembered that they were descended from one of the two brothers of William Barttelot of Stopham in the early sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Since no mediaeval brasses to the family retain their original shields, it is possible that the crescent arms were used up to the sixteenth century, after which the modern coat came into use, *Sable three gloves pendant argent tasselled or*. A shield of arms in the west window of Stopham church, which appears to be sixteenth- or seventeenth-century, shows Stopham (the crescents) impaling D'Oyley, as if to celebrate a marriage of the two families, although according to the official pedigree, the d'Oyley arms only came into the Barttelot collection through the marriage of John II with Joan Lewknor.

Another difficulty is that one of the stray shields at Stopham shows the gloves upright (Fig. 2). The church guide reprints a paper found 'in the Tin Box in the Vestry' which states that the gloves were originally upright, but that when Walter Barttelot I applied to the College of Arms for his correct arms and quarterings, they insisted that the gloves should be pendant, to

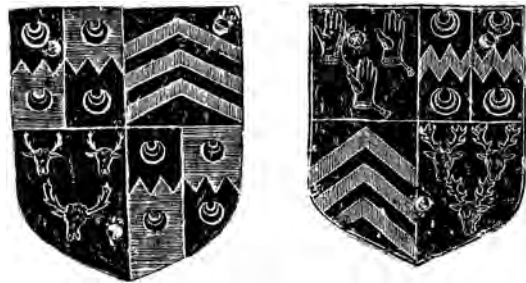


Fig. 2. Two stray shields, probably workshop 'wasters' (rubbing: author, 2011)

distinguish them from those of Gounter, a family based not far away at Racton. Accordingly all the new shields show this version of the arms. The note concludes, mysteriously, 'there was one fewer coat of arms than the number required, so the memorial to Richard Barttelot (ob. 1483) still had its old shield'.<sup>11</sup> Now Richard Barttelot I actually died in 1462, and has two seventeenth-century shields (of different sizes) with the correct new arms. It is possible that the first stray shield was made for this brass, for it matches the size of the smaller (sinister) shield, which shows Walton quartering Sygheston. It shows the crescent arms of Stopham quartering Lewknor and d'Oyley, and is clearly from the Marshall workshop and contemporary with the other Marshall shields at Stopham. It is possible that the slightly larger (dexter) shield was substituted after a firm decision had been made to use the gloves for Barttelot, which is shown quartering Stopham (crescents), Lewknor and d'Oyley. In that case the stray shield is a 'waster'. It is also possible that the note in the Tin Box refers to the other stray shield, which is not from the Marshall workshop. It gives the same

9 *The Visitation of the County of Gloucester: taken in the year 1623*, ed. J. Maclean and W.C. Heane, Harleian Society, 21 (London, 1885), p. 203; *The Visitation of the County of Worcester in the year 1569*, ed. W.P.W. Phillimore, Harleian Soc., 27 (London, 1888), p. 157.

10 *The Visitation of the County of Devon in the year 1620*, ed. F.T. Colby, Harleian Society, 6 (London, 1872), p. 843.

The arms are *Ermine on a pale nebulée azure, three sinister gloves pendant tasselled argent, the whole between two flanches azure each charged with two crescents palewise argent*; motto, *Mature*.

11 J. Masefield, *Stopham Remembered* (Stopham, 1991), pp. 15-16.

quarterings but with the Barttelot gloves upright, and the Stopham arms divided by a fess dancetty. It is probably also a workshop 'waster', though it could conceivably belong to the earlier brass from the Southwark workshops, that to John Barttelot IV. It is perhaps significant that the two Barttelot brasses that can be found outside Stopham, that to Thomas at Billingshurst, and Joan at Arundel, have long ago lost the shields that showed the Barttelot arms, as if a determined effort was being made to ensure that only the new correct heraldry was displayed. If so, when the 1634 Sussex visitation notes *Sable three dexter gloves, fingers downwards, tasselled argent*, for Barttelot on the Arundel brass they were recording what they considered should have been there rather than what was.<sup>12</sup> It rather looks as if the arms were not definitively fixed until the early seventeenth century, on the pedigree supplied by Sir William Segar, and it may be that the stray shields represent attempts by the brass engravers to depict what they believed to be the version of the arms previously used.

Yet another heraldic complication arises over a shield which was found in 1977 on the back of a brass in Graveney, Kent. It shows Lewkenor quartering Stopham, but has reversed the tinctures, as the metal has been cut away for colour on the chevrons and bucks' heads, whereas it should be the field that is coloured in both cases, the charges being metal. John Page-Phillips therefore assumed it was a 'waster' for the brass of John Barttelot II (d. 1453), and his wife Joan Lewknor, heiress of d'Oyley.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately the brass at Graveney is securely dated 1452, whereas the brass of John Barttelot, as we shall see, is fifteen years later. It is likely, therefore, that the shield at Graveney was being prepared for another brass altogether, in another church.

<sup>12</sup> Bodleian Library, MS Eng. misc. c 19, f. 83v.

### Sussex Marble

The great brass to Richard Barttelot III is set in a large slab of Sussex marble, and the same stone has been used to pave virtually the whole church. All the earlier brasses were re-laid in this Sussex marble in the mid seventeenth century, except that to John II (d. 1453), which is still in Purbeck marble, and that to William I (d. 1601), which is also in Sussex marble, but probably the original slab. Sussex marble is found in a variety of locations in the hill country around Petworth. In the Middle Ages it was occasionally used for architectural details, but it was never used for monumental slabs before the 1590s. It seems unlikely that the stone was sent to London for the brasses to be fixed, and then sent all the way back again, and much more plausible that the craftsmen from London came to Stopham to lay the brasses, including the additions set into the one surviving Purbeck slab. It is unusual for the Marshall workshop not to use black marble, but this appears to be an easily-explained exception. Several later brass inscriptions are set in the same Sussex stone, and many of the smaller plates were rearranged in the nineteenth century, apparently into new slabs, so it seems the quarries were still able to produce suitable slabs as late as the 1850s.

### ENGRAVING THE BARTTELOT BRASSES

If we look at the Barttelot brasses in sequence, we can attempt to distinguish which parts are original, and which belong to the two phases of additional work.

There are indeed two earlier monuments at Stopham, very weathered cross-slabs in the churchyard. They could be of any date from the eleventh to the fourteenth century, and are impossible to attribute to any individual, clerical or lay, though the old pedigree would like us to believe they represent two crusader members of

<sup>13</sup> J. Page-Phillips, *Palimpsests: the Backs of Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols. (London 1980), I, p. 34 (16L1), II, pl. 3.

the family who returned to Stopham for burial, John Barttelot, and his son Richard (d. 1216). But in reality, the series of family monuments began in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, when John Barttelot III commissioned brasses to commemorate his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents.

### I. Richard and Petronella Bertlot, 1462

The earliest brass in the church is that to Richard Bertlot I (d. 1462), and his wife, Petronilla or Pernel Walton (Fig. 1). The original plates consist of the figures of a man in civil dress, wearing a livery collar and holding his wand of office as marshal of the hall to the Earl of Arundel, with his wife in the fashionable 'horned' headdress, over an inscription in Gothic minuscule, from which a small sliver at the end is missing. The inscription is in rather difficult Latin verse, and the date of death has in the past been mistranslated: it is in fact 1462, and the figures fit perfectly into the London 'D' series at that date, the brasses associated with the marblers Richard Stevens and James Reames.<sup>14</sup> Whether there were originally shields or other devices cannot be known, as the plates were re-laid in Sussex marble in the seventeenth century, when two shields and a plate depicting one son (John III) and one daughter were added by the Marshall workshop. All the plates have been refixed with screws, presumably in the mid nineteenth century.

The inscription reads:

Dic O sarcophage quid celas tegmine petre :  
 Ossa sepultor(um) p(ro)dent tibi carmina  
 quor(um) / Nobilis Armigeri bertlot dictiq(ue)  
 ricardi : Ac petronille q(ue)m desponsaverat  
 ille. / Hic comitis q(u)e semel fuit aula  
 marchal arundell : MD deme t(er) x octo  
 (Chris)ti ruit ann[us] / Pro q(u)e viro rogita  
 c(on)jungetur sua spo(n)sa : Aureola(m)  
 grat(us) his (con)ferat obsec(r)o (Christu)s.

<sup>14</sup> Norris, *Memorials*, I, pp. 133, 141, II, fig. 159.



Fig. 3. Richard and Petronella Bertlot, 1462  
 (rubbing: author, 1963)

*Say, O tomb, what you conceal under this stone covering; may these verses tell who they are whose bones are buried beneath you, the noble esquire called Richard Barttelot, and Petronilla whom he had married. He was once the marshal of the Earl of Arundel; take away thrice ten and eight from 1500, thus goes the year of Christ; pray for the man, and that his wife will be joined to him, may Christ be pleased, I pray, to grant them glory.*

*Heraldry:* Dexter shield: Quarterly: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor; iv, d'Oyley. Sinister shield: Walton quartering Sygheston.

The dexter shield is noticeably larger than the sinister: it is possible that one of the stray shields (18 x 15 cm), was first intended for this position: it shows i, Stopham; ii, Lewknor; iii, d'Oyley; iv, Stopham, reflecting the probable earlier use of the 'Stopham' arms for Barttelot.

*Dimensions:* Figures 930 x 290 and 900 x 280 mm; inscription 100 x 650 mm; dexter shield 200 x 170 mm; sinister shield 190 x 160 mm; children 150 x 160 mm; slab 1.82 x 0.87 m.

A near-contemporary brass in Arundel College chapel, also from the London 'D' workshop, commemorated Joan, the aunt of this Richard Bertlot (died 1459), and her husband John Threel, who died in 1465. All that remains is the male figure, with his inscription (Fig. 4). He is depicted in armour, wearing a livery collar and holding a wand of office as marshal of the hospice to Earl William. The figure of the wife was very similar to that of her niece; that and her inscription plate survived until the eighteenth century, and are shown on a drawing now displayed in Arundel Castle, as well as in the Burrell manuscript collections for Sussex.<sup>15</sup> Both inscriptions were in verse, in the same style as the inscription to Richard and Pernel, undoubtedly the composition of a



Fig. 4. John Threel, husband of Joan Bertlot, 1465, Arundel (photo.: author)

15 BLAdd. MS 5699, f. 14v.



fellow of Arundel College. Three shields are lost: the eighteenth-century drawings and a rubbing of 1825 in the Antiquaries' library show the dexter one, of Threel. The 1634 Visitation notes that the sinister one was Barttelot, and the central one Threel impaling Barttelot.<sup>16</sup>

It appears, then, that the first brasses to the family were ordered from the same workshop at the same time, and with the assistance of the same poet. Thus began a fashion for brasses, which the Barttelot family took up with enthusiasm.

## II. John Barttelot I (d. 1428) and wife Joan, c. 1467-9

If Richard Bertlot's son John III had been involved in ordering his father's brass, he was soon inspired to commemorate his grandfather and great-grandfather. Unfortunately he did not commission them from the same workshop, the prestigious London 'D' of James Reames and Associates, which was the rival to the other London workshop, formerly associated with the great architect Henry Yevele, and maintained into the 1460s by John Essex ('London style B'). After his death in 1465 some of his craftsmen seem to have gathered around Thomas Stevyns, a coppersmith who had probably married the daughter of John Essex, and produced a rather unpredictable series of brasses dated between 1463 and 1476 (sometimes called 'style sub-B'). Eventually a much more coherent series of brasses emerged, probably under the leadership of Thomas Essex or the brothers Lorymer, who continued the tradition well into the sixteenth century ('Style F'). The brasses to the two John Barttelots both come from the workshop associated with Thomas Stevyns, lightly engraved, and with figures slightly out of

proportion. The lettering has very closely spaced minims, and looks rather spidery compared to the bold lettering of the major Reames and Essex family traditions.<sup>17</sup> Why they should change workshop after ordering the brass to Richard, and choose the rather inferior products of Thomas Stevyns and associates, can only be a matter of speculation – but it is of course quite possible that Stevyns charged rather less. The family had waited two generations before catching up on memorials to the first three Barttelot lords of Stopham. We can only speculate about the reasons, but they may well have been financial, the rise and fall of family fortunes, the fluctuating price of agricultural produce, or that of brasses. Both inscriptions are rather oddly worded, though not in verse, and again one suspects a fellow of Arundel College may have been responsible for the wording.

The elder couple is John Barttelot I (d. 1428) and his wife Joan, daughter and heiress of William de Stopham (Fig. 5). He was a member of the household of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, in which capacity he may have become aware of the availability of the Stopham estate through an advantageous marriage. Specifically as treasurer of the hospice he would have been involved in Earl Thomas's foundation at Arundel of a *Maison Dieu*. Either he or his son was executor to the Earl on his death on 13 October 1415. The original parts of the brass are the male figure, in civil dress (ignoring the unfortunate restored head), without either livery collar or wand of office, the female figure in a looser version of the 'horned' headdress, and with a small dog at the hem of her skirts, and the inscription in Gothic minuscule. Something has gone seriously wrong with the proportions of the figures, especially the female. Whether there were shields and other parts cannot be

16 Visitation of Sussex, 1634, Bodleian Library MS Eng. misc. c.19, f. 83v.

17 R. Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design c. 1420-85', *Jnl of the British Archaeological Association*, CXXXI (1978), especially pp. 67-8. See also Norris, *Memorials*, I, p. 133.



ascertained, since this brass also is re-laid in Sussex marble. One shield, and a group of two sons (John II and Thomas) were added in the seventeenth century; it is odd that the daughter, Joan Threel, was not represented. The head of the man was restored in the mid nineteenth century, very crudely; this must have been a first attempt by the engraver. Burrell's drawing shows the head missing.<sup>18</sup> Most of the plates are fixed with screws, but the shield is fully riveted, and one rivet each survives in the male figure and the group of sons.

The inscription reads:

Illustrissimi quo(n)dam Thome Comitiss  
Arundellie hospicii Thesaurarius Joh(ann)es  
Bartelot hic requiescit / humatus cu(m) uxore  
sua Johanna quo(n)dam Will(elm)i de  
Stopham filia qui quidem Joh(ann)es Anno  
domini / M<sup>o</sup> • CCCC<sup>o</sup> • xxvij<sup>o</sup> • sexto die  
Februarii diem suu(m) clausit extremu(m)  
quor(um) animab(us) propiciet(ur) deus Amen.

*Once the Treasurer of the Hospice to the most illustrious Thomas, Earl of Arundel, John Barttelot lies here buried, with his wife, Joan, daughter of William de Stopham; the said John concluded his final day on the sixth of February, 1428/9; on whose souls may God have mercy.*

*Heraldry:* Barttelot impaling Stopham.

*Dimensions:* Figures 750 x 220 and 750 x 270 mm, inscription 70 x 660 mm; sons 160 x 160 mm; shield 140 x 165 mm; slab 1.80 x 0.79 m.

### III. John Bartelot II (d. 1453), and wife Joan, c. 1467-9

The second couple is John II, son of the previous John Bartelot, died 1453, and his wife Joan, daughter of John Leukenore, the parents of Richard I (Fig. 6). He is described as 'prudent

counsellor' to Thomas, John and William, Earls of Arundel, and is shown in armour, still with no livery collar or wand. Armour in this case is appropriate, since he sailed for Harfleur with Earl Thomas on Henry V's expedition in September 1415, and was described as *le puyne* [the younger]. By the end of the month he was on his way home again to accompany the Earl, who had been stricken with the flux, and in fact died on 13 October, soon after reaching Arundel. John Barttelot, or his father, was executor of the Earl's will, but he missed the adventure at Agincourt on the 25th of that month.<sup>19</sup> He lived to old age, and had no scars to show, but he represented the county in Parliament in 1434.

Again the head is an unfortunate restoration, though it has a great deal more character than that of his father. It too was shown as missing on Burrell's drawing.<sup>20</sup> The original head must have resembled that to his brother-in-law John Threel. The wife is almost identical to her mother-in-law, rather better proportioned, and with a larger dog crouched at her feet. Most of the inscription, in Gothic minuscule, is original, though the left end of the plate has been restored in the mid nineteenth century (Fig. 7). This brass is in its original slab, of blue Purbeck marble, though refixed with screws, save for the top dexter and lower sinister shield, the female figure and the children, which are riveted. It would be most unusual for a brass of an armed man not to incorporate shields of arms, but if so the indents are neatly obscured behind those of the seventeenth-century additions. As we have already seen, this John Bartelot used as his seal the arms later attributed to Stopham, *Quarterly per fess indented, four crescents counterchanged*, with the text *ioh(ann)is bartelot de stopham*; found on a document of 1433 in the British Library.<sup>21</sup> It is

<sup>18</sup> BL Add. MS 5699, f. 120v.

<sup>19</sup> W.D. Cooper, 'Sussex Men at Agincourt', *SAC*, XV (1863), pp. 128-9.

<sup>20</sup> BL Add. MS 5699, f. 119v.

<sup>21</sup> Woodcock and Flower, *Ordinary*, III, p. 96, and see n. 5 above.

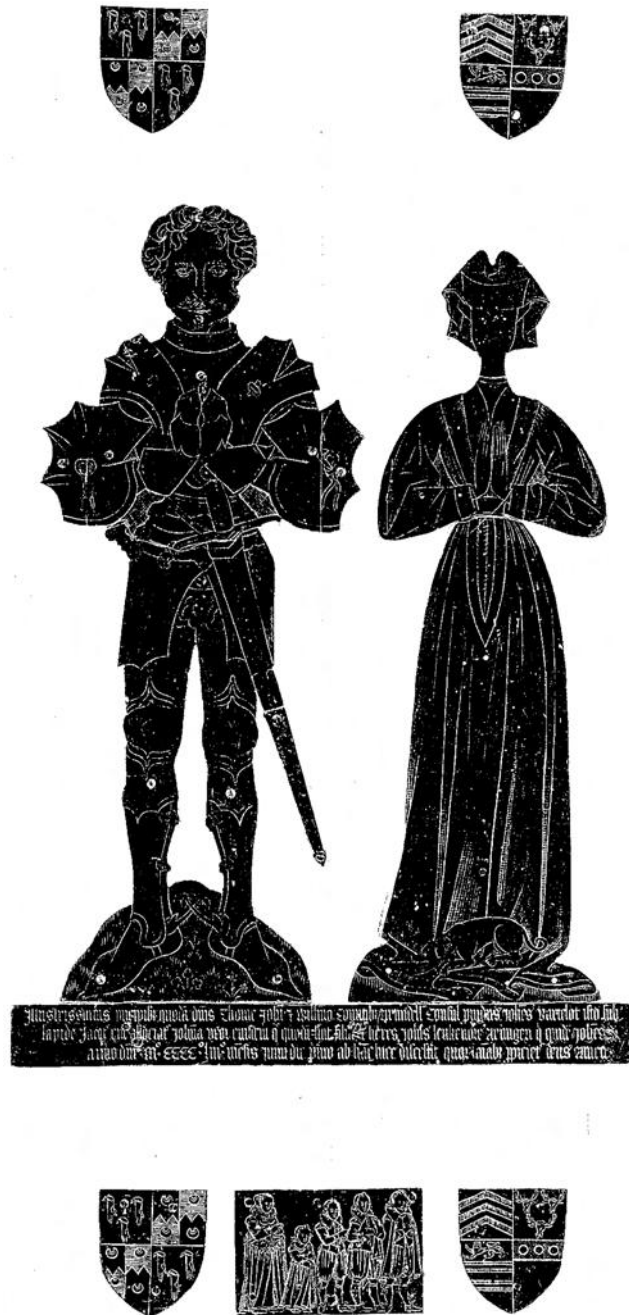


Fig. 6. John Bartelot, 1453, and wife Joan, engr. c. 1467-9  
(rubbing: author, 1989)

quite possible that shields showing these arms did once exist, but were removed to replace them with the later Barttelot arms, the gloves. As well as the four shields, a plate showing three sons and two daughters (although the pedigree lists Richard I, Thomas, James, John and Katherine) was added in the seventeenth century.

The inscription reads:

[Illu]strissim[is] p[ri]ncipib[us] quonda[m]  
d[omi]nis Thome Joh[ann]i & Will[el]mo  
Comitib[us] Arundell[ie] Consul prudens  
Joh[ann]es Bartelot isto sub / [... lapide  
Jac]it cui associat[ur] Joh[ann]a uxor  
eiusdem q[ui] quo[n]da[m] fuit filia et heres  
Joh[ann]is Leukenore Armigeri q[ui] quide[m]  
Joh[ann]es / [... anno] d[omi]ni • M<sup>o</sup> •  
CCCC<sup>o</sup> • liij<sup>o</sup> • me[n]sis Junii die p[ri]mo ab  
hac luce discessit quor[um] a[n]i[m]ab[us]  
p[ro]piciet[ur] deus Amen.

*Once the prudent Counsellor to the most illustrious lords Thomas, John and William, Earls of Arundel, John Bartelot lies under this stone; with him is associated Joan his wife, once daughter and heiress of John Lewkenor esquire, the which John departed from this light on the first of June, 1453; on whose souls may God have mercy. Amen.*

The second word in the second line now appears to read *Jacit* or *Jacit*, which are meaningless; there is also an abbreviation mark after the word, so it may have been something like *lapide ponit(ur)*, ‘under this stone is placed’.



Fig. 7. John Bartelot, 1453, and wife Joan, c. 1467-9  
detail of inscription  
(photo.: author)

There also needs to be another word to begin the third line.

*Heraldry:* Top and bottom dexter: Barttelot quartering Stopham; top and bottom sinister: Quarterly, i, Lewkenor; ii, d’Oyley; iii, Tregoz; iv, Camoys.

*Dimensions:* Figures 950 x 380 and 900 x 270 mm, inscription 80 x 740 mm; shields 150 x 130 mm; children 150 x 230 mm; slab 1.77 x 0.75 m.

#### IV. John Barttelot III, 1493

A small and simple inscription plate alone commemorates John, son of Richard Barttelot, who died in 1493 (Fig. 8). It is from the



Fig. 8. John Barttelot, 1493, inscription  
(rubbing: author, 2011)

London 'F' workshop, the eventual successor of the 'B' series. A small piece of the left end of the plate was restored in the nineteenth century.

John Barttelot is not described as holding any office in the Arundel household, and although he must have been responsible for the three previous brasses his own executors were obviously hard pressed for money. England lay under the yoke of the Welsh monarchy, and throughout the Tudor period the Barttelots seem to have become rather shy of memorialization. Only this one small inscription plate was made for Stopham in all the years from 1484 to 1600. It is now set at the foot end of the slab containing the brass of his grandson William Barttelot I, immediately under a seventeenth-century kneeling figure. It has usually been accepted that this figure was intended to represent John III, but the drawings by Burrell show that the kneeling figure belongs to the brass of William Barttelot, and that the inscription to John III was associated with a shield and a group of three sons and one daughter (Fig. 9).<sup>22</sup> The group of children is now attached to a Sussex marble slab which originally held the brass of Henry Barttelot (d. 1710); there is no indent for the inscription of 1493, so we must conclude that the brass of John Barttelot III was in another stone now lost or covered, and only placed in its present position in the nineteenth century. The group of children is certainly appropriate, for John Barttelot III did have three sons, John IV, Richard and Thomas, and one daughter Anne. The shield however, which Burrell associated with this brass, was probably not intended for it.

The inscription reads:

[O]rate p(ro) a(n)i(m)a Joh(ann)is Bartellot  
fili & hered(is) Ric(ard)i / [B]artellot de  
Stoph(a)m qui obijt xx<sup>o</sup> die Nove(m)bris /  
[A(nn)o] d(omi)ni M<sup>o</sup> CCCC lxxxiiij<sup>o</sup>  
Cui(us) a(n)i(m)e p(ro)piciet(ur) de(us) amen.



Fig. 9. John Barttelot, 1493, children engr. c. 1630-35  
(rubbing: author, 2011)

*Pray for the soul of John Barttelot, son and heir of  
Richard Bartellot of Stopham, who died the 20th  
November 1493; on whose soul may God have mercy.*

*Dimensions:* Inscription 90 x 370 mm.; children  
200 x 290 mm.

Another contemporary Barttelot brass does exist, not far away in Billingshurst. It commemorates Thomas, brother of Richard I, who died on 30 January 1499 (new style 1500), and his wife Elizabeth Okehurst. He is shown in civil dress, she in the conventional 'pedimental' headdress, turned slightly to face each other. The inscription survives at their feet, as does the sinister of a pair of shields above; worn indents below indicate two groups of children. This brass is from the London 'G' workshop, the successor to 'D', and which was eventually to develop a virtual monopoly on London-made brasses.

#### V. John Barttelot (d. 1525), c. 1600

For over a century no new brasses were added, but eventually a small inscription plate was produced to commemorate John IV, son of the above John Barttelot III, who had died in 1525 (Fig. 10). It is in the lower case Roman script

<sup>22</sup> BL Add. MS 5699, ff. 119 and 120v.

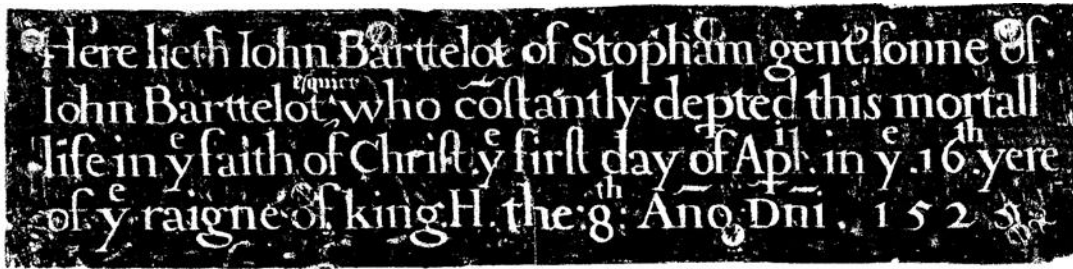


Fig. 10. *John Barttelot, 1525, engr. c. 1600*  
(rubbing: author, 2011)

used by the Southwark workshops at the end of the sixteenth century, most often in the early 1590s but occasionally as late as 1610. The word ‘esquier’ has been inserted, in a Gothic script. The wording is odd: it tells us that he ‘constantly departed this mortall life in the faith of Christ’, although in 1525 he can only have been a Catholic, and the date is confirmed by giving the regnal year of Henry VIII. It leaves an ambiguous message about the enthusiasm felt by the family about Queen Elizabeth’s new religion, or their uncertainty on what the imminent arrival of James VI would entail. The plate is now set in a Sussex marble slab, which lies crosswise in the sanctuary. That can hardly have been the original arrangement, and must be part of the nineteenth-century restoration.

It is possible that the smaller of the two stray shields was made for this brass. It is from the Southwark workshops, but shows what may have been an earlier version of the arms, whereas the brass of William Bartelot has the definitive version. If so, this brass was probably made a year or so before that to William and Anne Bartelot, though doubtless commissioned by Richard III who was William’s grandson and heir.

The inscription reads:

Here lieth Iohn Barttelot of Stopham  
gent(leman), sonne of / Iohn Barttelot \\  
esquier // who co(n)stantly dep(ar)ted this

mortall / life in ye faith of Christ, ye first day  
of Ap(ri)l in ye •16<sup>th</sup> • yere / of ye raigne of  
king H(enry) the 8<sup>th</sup> An(n)o D(omi)ni 1525.

*Heraldry:* Quarterly: i, Bartelot, but with the  
gloves the wrong way up; ii, Stopham, but  
with a fess dancetty inserted; iii, Lewknor; iv,  
d’Oyley.

*Dimensions:* Inscription 120 x 490 mm; shield  
180 x 150 mm; slab 1.75 x 0.85 m.

## VI. William and Anne Bartelot, 1601

William, who lived to the age of 97, was the nephew and heir of John IV, who died in 1525. His father Richard Barttelot II died in France and was buried there; he has no commemoration at Stopham. Nor does his son Robert, who predeceased him, unless we are right in supposing that the kneeling figure added to the brass of William and Elizabeth is intended to represent Robert. The main part of the brass is a typical product of the Southwark workshops, competently designed, though not of the highest quality (Fig. 11). The most famous brass engraver from this tradition was Garret Johnson, but he worked together with many other masons who seem to have shared pattern books. This brass may probably be attributed to the Cure workshop. The original brass consists of the figure of a man in civil dress, and his wife, standing and turned slightly towards each other;



Fig. 11. William Bartelot, 1601, wife Anne, and son Robert  
(rubbing: author, 2009)

the upper part of her figure, and his feet, are nineteenth-century restorations. She is unusual for the period in keeping a pet dog, who lies curled between her feet. Below is an inscription in Roman capitals; above are two shields. Comparison of the treatment of the charges with the shields on the other brasses indicates that these shields are original work of 1601; they are certainly not part of the Marshall commission. For instance, the Stopham coat is treated quite differently, and the three chevrons in the Lewkenor coat are hatched horizontally, whereas the later brasses show them hatched vertically. (In neither case does this agree with the later code of hatching to indicate tinctures.) The arms are only engraved on the plate, instead of cutting away the surface for colour inlays as had been the practice until a few years previously. The Southwark workshops by now only inlaid colour on their better quality brasses. The plates are fixed in a slab of Sussex marble, which in this case is probably the original setting. Purbeck marble had become unobtainable by 1600, and the Southwark workshops regularly used Sussex marble, even for brasses and other monuments far from Sussex. The large kneeling figure below the inscription is by Edward Marshall, and is the model for a figure in the north window, almost certainly inserted in the mid nineteenth century. It is much larger than the children added to the other brasses, but that would be quite natural if it represents Robert Barttelot I, who died in his father's lifetime, a significant link in the family pedigree who had no other monument. Burrell's drawing shows it in its present position. He also shows the standing male figure as lost, and the female figure as partly covered.<sup>23</sup> Since the male figure is undoubtedly authentic work of 1600 (save the feet), it must have been preserved loose when Burrell visited. The brass was then 'without the Communion rails', in other words in the chancel, whereas it is now in the nave.

The inscription reads:

HERE LYETH WILLIAM BARTELOT  
ESQVIRE WHO / TOOKE TO WIFE  
ANNE COVERT BY WHOM HE HAD /  
ISSVE ROBERT BARTELOT, AND  
DEPARTED THIS LIFE / THE XIJTH OF  
IVNE 1601 • AFTER HEE HAD LIVED 97  
/ YEARES WHOSE SOVLE RESTETH  
WITH GOD.

(The name Bartelot has been corrected from Bartelet in both cases.

*Heraldry:* Dexter: of six pieces: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Walton; iv, Sygheston; v, Lewknor; vi, d'Oyley. Sinister: Covert, an annulet on the fess for difference.

*Dimensions:* Figures 490 x 160 and 480 x 160 mm, inscription 110 x 490 mm; kneeling figure 360 x 240 mm; shields 165 x 140 mm; slab 1.67 x 0.75 m.

#### **VII. Richard Barttelot III (d. 1614) and wives Mary and Rose, c. 1630-35**

The finest of all the brasses produced by Edward Marshall at Stopham, indeed one of the finest anywhere of that period, is the one to Richard Barttelot, who died in 1614, and his two wives, Mary and Rose (Fig. 12). This must have been the first commissioned by Walter Barttelot I, who afterwards restored and embellished all the earlier brasses. Richard was the grandson and heir of William Barttelot I. He is shown in armour, and his wives in the splendid costumes of the time. There are three shields above the three figures, and two plates of children below. Under the left-hand wife are four sons (the eldest in armour) and one daughter, representing the children of Mary (née Covert), who were Walter I (Fig. 1), Edward, William II, John VI and Ann (skulls over Edward and John indicate that they died young). Under the right-hand wife are two sons

<sup>23</sup> BL Add. MS 5699, f. 120v.



Fig. 12. Richard Barttelot, 1614, and wives, engr. c. 1630-35  
(rubbing: author, 1966)



and two daughters, representing the children of Rose (née Hatton), Richard IV, Robert II, Mary and Frances; (a skull over Frances). The appropriate shields are over the heads of the two wives. Most of the plates have been refixed with woodscrews, probably in the nineteenth century, but two of the shields are still held by the original rivets, proving that this is the original slab. A small inscription to William Barttelot II, 1666/7, the second son (although listed third on this brass), was added at the foot of the slab (no. X below).

The inscription reads:

SVB HOC IN D(OMI)NO REQ(V)IESCIT  
MARMOR(E) RIC(ARD)VS BARTTELOT  
AR(MIGER), HERES & NEPOS GVLIELMI  
BART=/TELOT AR(MIGERI); EX FILIO  
SVO VNICO ROB(ER)TO & MARIA  
CONIVGE EI(VS) {FILIA NATV  
MAXIMA IO(HAN)NIS APSLEY / DE  
THAKEHAM AR(MIGERI)} Q(VI)  
RIC(ARD)VS E MARIA IA VXOR(E)  
{FILIA NATV MI(NI)I(M)A RIC(ARD)I  
COVERT DE SLAVGHAM AR(MIGERI)} /  
4OR FILIOS, & VNA(M) FILIA(M),  
SCIREL(ICE)T GVALTERV(M), EDWARD(V)M,  
GVLIELMV(M), IOH(ANN)EM, & ANNA(M)  
& EX AL=/TERA CONIVGE ROESIA  
{FILIA RIC(ARD)I HATTON DE  
THAMISDITTON IN COM(ITATV)  
SVRREY / AR(MIGERI)} 2OS FILLOS  
(sic) & TOTIDEM FILIAS, VI(DELICET):  
RIC(ARD)V(M), ROB(ER)TV(M), MARIA(M),  
& FRANCISCA(M), SVSCE=/PIT & EX  
HAC VITA 6TO DIE IVNIJ AN(N)O  
ÆTAT(IS) SVÆ 50°, ANNOQ(VE)  
D(OMI)NI 1614, VER(SVS) / HVI(VS)  
ECCL(ES)IÆ DE STOPHAM IN  
COM(ITATV) SVSSEX PATRONVS  
EMIGRAVIT.

*Under this marble rests in the Lord Richard Barttelot Esq., heir and grandson of William Barttelot Esq. by his only son Robert and his wife Mary (eldest*

*daughter of John Apsley of Thakeham Esq.); the said Richard by Mary his first wife (the youngest daughter of Richard Covert of Slaugham, Esq.) had four sons and one daughter, namely Walter, Edward, William, John and Anne; and by his other wife Rose (the daughter of Richard Hatton of Thames Ditton in Surrey, Esq.) had two sons and as many daughters, namely Richard, Robert, Mary and Frances; and departed from this life on the sixth of June, in the year of his age 50, and of the Lord 1614, as patron of this church of Stopham in Sussex.*

*Heraldry:* Dexter: of twelve pieces: i, Covert; ii, Aguillon; iii, Vawer; iv, Cooke; v, Rokesley; vi, Burford; vii, l'Isle; viii, Bohun; ix, Bickworth; x, Marechal, Earl of Pembroke; xi, Strongbow, Earl of Clare; xii, MacMorrough. Centre: Of eight pieces, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor; iv, d'Oyley, v, Tregoz; vi, Camoys; vii, Walton; viii, Sygheston. Sinister: Hatton.

*Dimensions:* Figures, 710 x 260, 760 x 250 and 710 x 280 mm, inscription 220 x 880 mm, shields 200 x 160 mm; children 180 x 280 mm; slab 2.20 x 0.98 m.

#### VIII. Mary Barttelot, (d. 1626), c. 1630-40

Another brass from the Marshall workshop made at this period is the inscription to Mary, the wife of Walter Barttelot, who commissioned all these brasses (Fig. 13). Although she died in 1626, the brass may well have been engraved a decade later. It is accompanied by a shield, and a plate with six daughters, but it appears there was never a main figure, which is extraordinary. The interest was dominantly genealogical and heraldic, but it seems odd that Walter did not want a representation of his own wife. It was set in a slab of Sussex marble, but the shield has been moved off that slab on to an adjacent paving slab, to make way for a much later inscription to Walter Barttelot himself.

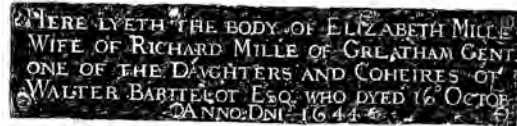
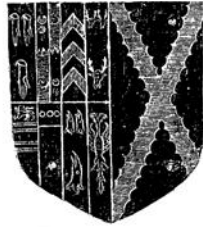


Fig. 14. Elizabeth Mille, 1644  
(rubbing: author, 2011)



Fig. 13. Mary Barttelot, 1626, engr. c. 1630-40  
(rubbing: author, 2011)

Beneath this marble lies concealed Mary, (eldest daughter of John Middleton of Horsham in Sussex, Esq.), wife of Walter Barttelot Esq., to whom she bore six daughters, namely Frances, Mary, Anne, Jane, Elizabeth and Barbara; and she departed from this light on the 20th of October, in the year of her age 39, of the Lord, 1626.

The inscription reads:

SVB HOC TEGIT(V)R MARMORE MARIA  
{FILIA NATV MAXIMA IOH(ANN)IS /  
MIDDLETON DE HORSHAM IN  
COM(ITATV) SVSSEX AR(MIGERI)}  
GVALTERI / BARTTELOT AR(MIGERI)  
CONIVX CVI SEX FILIAS SC(IRE)L(ICE)T  
FRANCISCA(M) / MARIAM, ANNAM,  
IANAM, ELIZABETHAM & BARBARAM /  
PEP(ER)IT & EX HAC LVCE 20º  
OCTOBRIS A(NN)O ÆTATIS SVÆ / 39º  
ANNO DOMINI 1626 EXCESSIT.

*Heraldry:* Quarterly of eight, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor; iv, d'Oyley; v, Tregoz; vi, Camoys; vii, Walton; viii, Sygheston; impaling Middleton.

*Dimensions:* Inscription 170 x 590 mm; shield 250 x 220 mm, daughters 160 x 320 mm; slab 1.53 x 0.76 m.

#### IX. Elizabeth Mille, 1644

Walter Barttelot died in 1640, and had made no provision for a brass for himself, yet there is one

for the youngest of his six daughters, Elizabeth (Fig. 14). She married Richard Mille of Greatham, and died in 1644. Her brass is also from the Marshall workshop; it consists of no more than an inscription plate and shield, in a slab of Sussex marble.

The inscription reads:

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF  
ELIZABETH MILLE / WIFE OF  
RICHARD MILLE OF GREATHAM  
GENT / ONE OF THE DAUGHTERS  
AND COHEIRES OF / WALTER  
BARTTELOT ESQ. WHO DYED 16  
OCTOB(ER) / ANNO D(OMI)NI 1644.

*Heraldry:* Mille, with a molet for difference, impaling Barttelot.

*Dimensions:* Inscription 120 x 500 mm, shield 210 x 180 mm, slab 1.32 x 0.77 m.

#### ARMORIAL GLASS, c. 1630-40

As well as the brasses, Walter Barttelot commissioned some important stained glass. In the east window is a series of shields in oval wreaths, with labels, illustrating the same family connections as are shown on the brasses, and a few additional ones (Fig. 15). There is a tradition that the glass was moved from Stopham House in 1638, when the chancel was substantially rebuilt and the east window repaired or new made. The central shield of the east window is uninscribed, and probably represents the donor, Walter Barttelot, displaying the same arms as the baron of his wife's shield (brass VIII). The shields are all clearly contemporary, and since they include only the first marriage of Richard Barttelot, it is likely they date from the early seventeenth century, and were made by Walter Barttelot for the house before he decided to move them to the church. In every case except the central

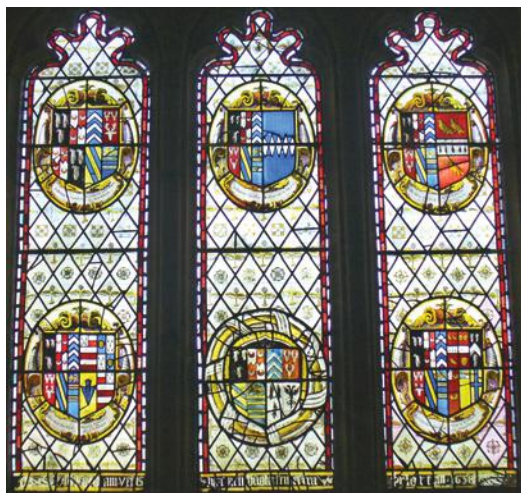


Fig. 15. Armorial glass in east window  
(photo.: author)

one, the gloves of Barttelot are tasselled *argent* instead of *or*. The inscriptions and the setting probably all date from the construction of the window in 1638.

The three lights each contain two shields as follows:

1a Of six pieces, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor, iv, d'Oyley; v, d'Oyley ancient; vi, Tregoz; impaling Quarterly, i & iv, Apsley; ii, Power; iii, Sydney; inscribed *Robertus Bartlot, Maria Apsley de Thakham*, celebrating the marriage of Robert Bartelot I with Mary Apsley of Thakeham.

1b Of eight pieces, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewkenor; iv, d'Oyley; v, d'Oyley ancient; vi, Tregoz; vii, Walton; viii, Sygheston. No inscription; Steer suggests it represents a son of John Barttelot III (brass IV) and Olive Siggeston, but it is more likely, given the central position, to represent Walter Barttelot, as donor of the window.

1c Of six pieces, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor, iv, d'Oyley; v, d'Oyley ancient; vi, Tregoz; impaling Of six pieces, i, Covert;

ii, Vawer; iii, Fagger; iv, Cooke; v, l'Isle; vi, Bohun; inscribed *Richardus Bartlot, Maria Covert de Slaugham*, celebrating the marriage of Richard Barttelot III with Mary Covert (brass VII).

2a Barttelot quartering Stopham, impaling Quarterly i, Lewknor, ii, d'Oyley; iii; d'Oyley Ancient; iv, Tregoz; inscribed *Iohannes Bartlot, Ioana de Lewknor De Warnham*, celebrating the marriage of John Barttelot II with Joan Lewknor (brass II).

2b Of six pieces, i, Barttelot (set in reverse); ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor, iv, d'Oyley; v; d'Oyley ancient; vi, Tregoz; impaling Dawtre; inscribed *Iohannes Bartlot, Katherina de Altariþa*, celebrating the marriage of John Barttelot IV with Katherine Dawtre (brass V).

2c Of six pieces, i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor, iv, d'Oyley; v; d'Oyley ancient; vi, Tregoz; impaling Covert; inscribed *Willielmus Bartlot, Anna Covert de Hascombe*, celebrating the marriage of William Barttelot I with Anne Covert (brass VI).

3b A very small shield, Sygheston, with the inscription ...*ESTON*, probably displaced.

Below is the inscription, *Ad formam vetus haec renovata fenestram priorem 1638*.

In the North wall of the Nave (N3) is a window of two lights (Fig. 16). As it stands it is a hotch-potch, and it is possible that surviving fragments from several nave windows were combined into one in 1853. The purpose is evidently to expound the Stopham pedigree before the intermarriage with Barttelot. The original glass must also be part of Walter Barttelot's commission, and is signed by the Flemish glass painter Roelant. It was repaired in 1853, and some new glass was made then, but since it is not easy to distinguish the two phases of work it is here described as one:

1a Inscription: *Brian De Stoph(a)m Miles / Fili(us) Et Heres Rad(u)l(phi)i Militi(is) / Floruit Temporib(us) Joh(ann)is et / Henric(i) Regum Angliae et Pad(o)l(phi)o / De Stoph(a)m Milit(is) Filio Et*



Fig. 16. Armorial and figural glass in north window of nave (photo.: author)

*He(re)de / Relict(o) Objit An(n)o R(egi)s Ed(wa)r(d)i / I' 2<sup>de</sup> An(n)o D(omi)ni 1277.*

(Sir Brian de Stopham, son and heir of Sir Ralph, flourished in the days of John and Henry [III], kings of England, leaving Sir Padulph (*sic*) de Stopham, son and heir; he died in the second year of the reign of King Edward I, AD 1277.)

2a Copy of brass figure of Robert Barttelot I (on brass VI); Initials *RE*

3a Kneeling armed figure in tabard, Stopham. Shields: (i) Barttelot, (ii) Barttelot impaling Stopham.

4a Shield, Of six pieces: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Walton; iv, Sygheston; v, Lewknor; vi, Doyley.

A1 Shield, Of six pieces: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor with a molet gules for difference; iv, Doyley; v, Doyley ancient; vi, Stopham.

1b Inscriptions: *RoeLant Fesit. Haec Fenestra Refecta Est An(n)o D(o)m(in)i 1853.* (Rowland made it; this window was restored in 1853).

2b Group of three girls; shield: Barttelot impaling Stopham; shield: Palmer, impaling Stopham; lozenge: Stopham. These represent the three daughters of William de Stopham (d. before 1389): Joan, w. of John Barttelot (brass I), Isabella, w. of Robt. Palmer, and Margaret.

3b Figure in tabard of Stopham.

4b Shield: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Sygheston; iv, Lewknor; v, Doyley; impaling Covert (omitting the fess).

5b Shield: Barttelot.

In the west wall of the Tower is a window of two lights (WI), with glass that is mostly nineteenth-century, but which does incorporate two shields, apparently seventeenth-century and contemporary with the other heraldic glass.

1a Inscription, *BARTTELOT.*

1b Two crests of Barttelot, inscription *MATURE.*

1c Shield: Stopham (or 'Barttelot ancient?') impaling Doyley.

2c Inscription, *BARTTELOT.*

2b Two crests of Barttelot, inscription *MATURE.*

2a Shield: Fitzalan quartering Maltravers.

Borders of both lights made up of gloves and initials *B.*

#### BETWEEN THE CIVIL WAR AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Walter Barttelot himself, despite expending much research, time and money on his ancestors, has no contemporary memorial. Much later, a brass inscription was made for him during the next and final phase of catching up and restoration (no. XVI below). After the Civil War, and until the reign of Queen Victoria, there are only a few small brasses, each one apparently an individual commission.

#### X. William Barttelot II, 1666

Since Walter Barttelot left no male heir, the estate descended to his brother William II, who died without heir in 1666. His brass is an insignificant little plate, set in the great slab of his grandfather Richard and his wives.

Inscription:

H(ic) S(epultus) J(acet) / GVLIELMVS  
BARTTELOT Gen(erosus) / Filius Secundus  
Ricardi / Barttelot qui obiit / Feb. 1mo 1666.

*Here lies buried William Barttelot, Gentleman,  
second son of Richard Barttelot, who died 1st  
February 1666/7.*

*Dimensions:* 110 x 160 mm.

#### XI. Anne Barttelot, 1690

The estate now descended to the heirs of Richard's brother Henry I (d. 1634), through his son Henry II (d. 1648, commemorated by an inscription of c. 1853, no. XVII below). His son Walter Barttelot II (d. 1702) married Anne Bettesworth (d. 1690), and they are commemorated by two small brasses on adjacent slabs of Sussex marble at the west end of the nave. However the inscription to Anne Barttelot was seen by Burrell 'within the communion Rails'.<sup>24</sup>

Inscription:

H(ic) S(epultus) I(acet) / Anna Barttelot  
{Tho(mae) Bettesworth / Gen(erosi) Filia  
primogenita Petriq(ue) / Bettesworth Militis  
consanguinea} / Gualteri Barttelot Gen(erosi)  
nuperrime / Conju(n)x : obiit 9<sup>o</sup> die  
Oct(obris) 1690.

*Here lies buried Anne Barttelot (eldest daughter of  
Thomas Bettesworth, Gentleman, and related to Sir  
Peter Bettesworth), late wife of Walter Barttelot, who  
died 9 October 1690.*

*Dimensions:* Inscription 120 x 240 mm; slab 650 x 750 mm.

24 BL Add. MS 5699, f. 120v.

**XII. Walter Barttelot II, 1702**

The brass of Walter Barttelot, 1702, includes a shield of arms with a strapwork surround on a square plate, and an inscription in Roman minuscule, both rather lightly engraved.

Inscription:

H(ic) S(epultus) J(acet) / Gualterus Barttelot / Ar(miger) qui obiit 8<sup>o</sup> die Apri(lis) / Anno Ætatis suæ 63 / Annoq(ue) Do(mi)ni 1702.

*Here lies buried Walter Barttelot Esquire, who died 8th April in the year of his age 63, of the Lord 1702.*

*Heraldry:* Barttelot, impaling Bettsworth.

*Dimensions:* Inscription 200 x 280 mm, arms 200 mm square; slab 1.80 x 0.87 m.

**XIII. Henry Barttelot III, 1710**

A younger brother of the last Walter, Henry Barttelot of Fittleworth, has a brass of exceptionally good quality, with an achievement of arms and an inscription in cursive script, deeply engraved on a solid metal plate (Fig. 17). The maker was obviously very competent, but there are no other examples of his work in Sussex or apparently elsewhere. It is now fixed to the lower part of the slab for the above Walter Barttelot (XII); its original slab is the one which now holds the wasters (XV) and the nineteenth-century inscription to Henry Barttelot of 1648 (XVII).

Inscription:

Here Lyes Interred y<sup>c</sup> Body of Henry / Barttelot Esq<sup>r</sup> late of Fittleworth, in / this County. Who departed this Life y<sup>c</sup> / 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1710 in y<sup>c</sup> 69<sup>th</sup> year of his Age.

*Heraldry:* Barttelot, impaling Stonestreet. Crest, a swan; motto MATVRA.

*Dimensions:* 460 x 350 mm; original slab 1.71 x 0.76 m.



Fig.17. Henry Barttelot, 1710  
(rubbing by author, 1962)

**XIV. Charles Barttelot, 1738**

At the top of the same slab is a very small brass inscription marking the grave of Captain Charles Barttelot, the son of Walter and Anne. His real monument is the tablet on the adjacent north wall, beginning a series of wall-tablets which replaced brasses until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Inscription:

CAPTAIN / CHARLS BARTTELOT / 1738

*Dimensions:* 100 x 130 mm.

The number XV was given by Mill Stephenson to the stray plates, two shields and a group of children, which have been discussed above.

After the early eighteenth century, the Barttelots deserted brasses, and favoured wall-tablets.

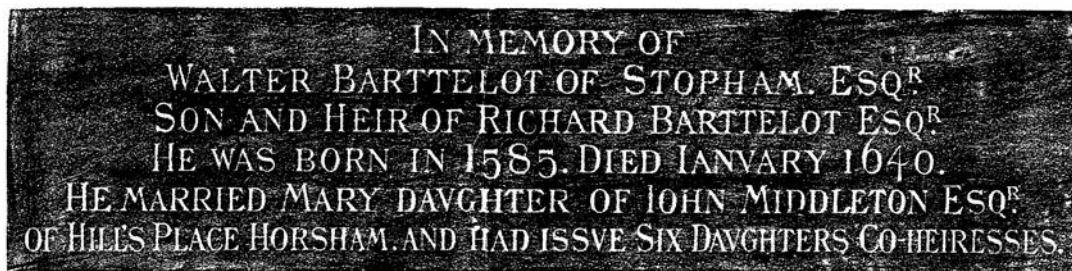


Fig. 18. *Walter Barttelot, 1640, engr. c. 1853*  
(*rubbing: author, 2011*)

These carry the family on through the generation when they adopted the name Smyth, in respect of an inheritance from a great-aunt, until 1837 when George Smyth succeeded to the estate, resumed the name Barttelot, and began to commission brasses and painted windows to his ancestors and immediate family.

**BRASSES COMMISSIONED BY  
GEORGE SMYTH BARTTELOT AND  
HIS SON SIR WALTER**

George Smyth Barttelot (1788-1872) was apparently responsible for a major but sensitive restoration of brasses, windows and the fabric of the church. The last two brasses listed by Mill Stephenson were engraved as part of this commission, probably in or soon after 1853 when the windows were restored. Both were certainly in place by 1877.<sup>25</sup>

**XVI. Walter Barttelot (d. 1640/1),  
enr. c. 1853**

An inscription in capitals is now set in the slab of no. VIII, over the earlier indent of the shield (Fig. 18). It must be held by back-rivets, as no rivets or screws are visible on the surface.

Inscription:

IN MEMORY OF / WALTER  
BARTTELOT OF STOPHAM ESQR /

SON AND HEIR OF RICHARD  
BARTTELOT ESQR / HE WAS BORN IN  
1585, DIED JANUARY 1640 / HE  
MARRIED MARY, DAUGHTER OF  
JOHN MIDDLETON ESQR / OF HILL'S  
PLACE HORSHAM AND HAD ISSVE  
SIX DAUGHTERS CO-HEIRESSES.

*Dimensions:* 150 x 600 mm.

**XVII. Henry Barttelot II (d. 1648),  
enr. c. 1853.**

Another inscription in the same style is set in the original slab of no. XIII, in which were later set two waste shields and the children probably intended for no IV; this inscription was inserted over the earlier indent of one shield, now reset above it.

IN MEMORY OF HENRY BARTTELOT  
OF STOPHAM ESQR SON OF / HENRY  
BARTTELOT ESQR FEODAR OF  
SVSSEX. HE WAS BORN IN 1612 / AND  
DIED NOVEMBER 1648. HE MARRIED  
SEPTEMBER 4TH 1637, HIS / COVSIN  
MARY BARTTELOT, DAUGHTER AND  
CO-HEIRESS OF WALTER /  
BARTTELOT ESQR AND HAD ISSVE  
WALTER AND HENRY. ALSO IN /  
MEMORY OF MARY WIFE OF THE  
ABOVE HENRY BARTTELOT ESQR.

*Dimensions:* 150 x 600 mm.

<sup>25</sup> Robinson, 'Stopham', p. 64.

As we have already seen, several small pieces of the medieval and early modern brasses were restored at this period, and some of the brasses were re-laid in new slabs of Sussex marble. At the same time, the series of brasses to contemporary members of the family resumed. Most of them are unsigned, but they must come from one of the prolific London workshops of the period.

In 1853, George Smyth Barttelot's surviving children had a brass made for those of their siblings who predeceased them.

**XVIII. David, Emma, Georgina Harriet, Caroline, Anna Maria Lloyd and George James Barttelot Barttelot, 1853**

Of the many children of George Smith Barttelot, six are commemorated by a brass inscription in Gothic lettering, 260 x 640 mm, below a window in the south wall of the nave, at the east end (sIII):

THIS WINDOW / was erected to the Memory of David • Emma • / Georgina Harriet • Caroline • Anna Maria Lloyd • / and George James Barttelot Barttelot ~ / by their surviving Brothers and Sister • Walter • / Brian • and Philadelphia Jane • A • D • MDCCCLIII •

The eldest son and heir was christened Walter Barttelot Barttelot IX (1820-93), and after a distinguished military career, was created Baronet in 1875. As well as commemorating his brothers and sisters, he had to commission brasses for his first wife and for a son and daughter. His father George Smyth Barttelot, however, is commemorated not by a brass but by a large stone tablet.

**XIX. Harriet Barttelot, 1863**

A brass tablet, 0.15 x 1.12 m, commemorates Harriet, the wife of Walter IX. It has an inscription in Gothic lettering, filled with black, the initials in red, and a small coloured shield.

It is fixed below window sIV, in the south wall of the nave, at the west end:

To the Memory of HARRIET BARTTELOT / the fourth daughter of Sir Christopher John Musgrave Bart. of Edenhall Cumberland, and wife of Walter Barttelot Barttelot / M. P. for West Sussex, by whom she had issue seven children, Ann who died an infant, Walter George, Edith Harriet, Evelyn Fanny, Blanche, Edmund Musgrave, and Ada Mary / She died July 29th 1863 in the 32nd year of her age / The above Window was erected by her Husband, to a most affectionate Wife.

*Heraldry:* I: Of eight pieces: i, Barttelot; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor; iv, d'Oyley; v, Tregoz; vi, Camoys; vii, Walton; viii, Sygheston; impaling Musgrave.

**XX Blanche Barttelot, 1876.**

A brass trapezoid plate, with an inscription in capitals, black lettering with red initials, 200 x 610 mm, under window sII, in the south wall of the chancel:

IN MEMORY OF / BLANCHE BARTTELOT, THE THIRD AND BELOVED / DAUGHTER OF SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT, BAR.<sup>T</sup> M.P. / BORN FEB.<sup>RY</sup> 5.<sup>TH</sup> 1858. DIED MARCH 28.<sup>TH</sup> 1876. / AGED 18 YEARS.

**XXI. Edmund Musgrave Barttelot, 1888**

The younger son of the first baronet is distinguished by a large brass plate, 1.14 x 0.67 m, mounted on a black marble slab 1.33 x 0.88 m, on the west wall of the nave. At the top are two tabernacles enclosing shield and crests, underneath which is the inscription in capitals: IN LOVING MEMORY OF / EDMUND MUSGRAVE BARTTELOT / CAPTAIN AND BREVET-MAJOR 7<sup>TH</sup> ROYAL FUSILIERS / SECOND SON OF COLONEL SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT



OF STOPHAM, BART. / CB, MP, AND HARRIET HIS WIFE, 4<sup>TH</sup> DAUGHTER OF / SIR CHRISTOPHER MUSGRAVE OF EDENHALL BART. / BORN 28<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1859 / HE SERVED IN THE AFGHAN WAR 1879-80, TOOK PART IN THE DEFENCE OF / CANDAHAR (MEDAL WITH CLASP). SERVED WITH THE MOUNTED INFANTRY IN / THE EGYPTIAN WAR OF 1882, AND WAS PRESENT AT THE TWO ACTIONS / AT KASSASSINA AND AT THE BATTLE OF TEL-EL-KEBIR, AND THE CAPTURE OF / CAIRO (MEDAL WITH CLASP AND THE KHEDIVE'S STAR). SERVED WITH THE NILE / EXPEDITION IN 1884 (MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES BREVET-MAJOR AND CLASP). / MAJOR BARTTELOT LEFT ENGLAND IN JANUARY 1887, AND WHILE / IN COMMAND OF A LARGE EXPEDITION IN SEARCH OF STANLEY, AND FOR THE / RELIEF OF EMIN PASHA, WAS TREACHEROUSLY SHOT AT ENARIA IN CENTRAL / AFRICA 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 1888, BY SENG, A NATIVE MANYEMA CARRIER PROVIDED / BY TIPPOO TIB. / THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY OFFICERS WHO SERVED WITH HIM IN / THE ROYAL FUSILIERS, TO THE MEMORY OF A GALLANT SOLDIER, / AND A LAMENTED FRIEND.

signed on the slab: FORSYTH SC. BAKER ST. LONDON.

Dexter tabernacle: Shield, Barttelot impaling Stopham; swan and tower crests. Sinister: badge of gartered rose, with crown above and running horse below.

Below it is another brass plate, 460 x 790 mm, with an inscription in capitals, mounted on black slab 640 x 970 mm:

THIS ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL IS ERECTED IN MEMORY OF / MAJOR EDMUND MUSGRAVE BARTTELOT / BY HIS FELLOW OFFICERS OF THE EMIN PASHA RELIEF EXPEDITION ON / THEIR RETURN TO ENGLAND 1890, IN TOKEN OF HIS COMPANIONS' HIGH / APPRECIATION OF HIS VALUABLE SERVICES, SO GALLANTLY RENDERED, / TO THE EXPEDITION. / LIEUT. W.G. STAIRS, R.E. + SURGEON T.H. PARKE, A.M.S. / CAPTAIN R.H. NELSON + A.J. MOUNTENAY JEPHSON.

**XXII Walter Barttelot Barttelot VIII, Bart., 1893.**

The first Baronet himself is commemorated by a large white alabaster tablet with a very long inscription in gilded capitals, and three brass shields at the top; set in red alabaster frame, mounted on white marble slab, 1.38 m. wide, over 2 m high, on the south wall of the nave.

SACRED / TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF / THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WALTER BARTTELOT / OF STOPHAM, BARONET, C.B., M.P., / A MEMBER OF HER MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL / BORN OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 1820, DIED FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup> 1893 / AGED 72 YEARS. / THE ELDEST SON OF GEORGE BARTTELOT ESQ. / HE SERVED AS AN OFFICER IN THE ROYAL DRAGOONS FROM 1839 TO 1853. / COLONEL 2<sup>ND</sup> VOL. BATT. ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT, / WHICH HE COMMANDED FOR OVER 22 YEARS, / AN ACTIVE MAGISTRATE AND DEPUTY LIEUTENANT FOR THE / COUNTY OF SUSSEX FOR OVER 40 YEARS; / A COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR WEST SUSSEX / REPRESENTED

WEST SUSSEX IN PARLIAMENT FROM 1860 TO 1885 / AND NORTH WEST SUSSEX FROM 1885 TILL HIS DEATH. / SIR WALTER MARRIED FIRST, 1852, HARRIET, DIED 1863, / DAUGHTER OF SIR CHRISTOPHER MUSGRAVE OF EDENHALL, 9<sup>TH</sup> BART. / AND BY HER HAD ISSUE, / WALTER GEORGE, BORN 1855 / EDMUND MUSGRAVE, BORN 1859, KILLED IN AFRICA 1888, / EDITH HARRIET, MARRIED MAJOR HENRY C. SCLATER, R.A. / EVELYN FANNY, MARRIED CHARLES M. SANDHAM ESQ. OF ROWBELL, / BLANCHE, BORN 1858, DIED 1876, / AND MARY, MARRIED COLONEL WILLIAM F. CAVAYE. / HE MARRIED SECONDLY, 1868, MARGARET, ONLY CHILD AND HEIR OF / HENRY BOLDERO ESQ., A.D.C. TO SIR HENRY BOUVERIE AT THE / BATTLE OF WATERLOO, AND AFTERWARDS IN / THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S STAFF IN PARIS. / SACRED ALSO / TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF / DAME MARGARET BARTTELOT, / WHO DIED FIVE DAYS ONLY BEFORE HER HUSBAND ON / JANUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> 1893 / AGED 70 YEARS.

*Heraldry:* The brass shields are I: Musgrave; II: Of nine pieces: i, Barttelot with Baronet's inescutcheon; ii, Stopham; iii, Lewknor; iv, d'Oyley; v, Tregoz; vi, Camoys; vii, Walton; viii, Sygheston; ix, Smyth; III: Boldero, quartering Chitting.

### **XXIII. Sir Walter Barttelot IX, 1900**

The second Baronet, who did not long outlive his father, has a fine brass plate, 1.07 x 0.64 m, on the west wall of the Nave. It bears a very elaborate achievement of arms above an inscription in raised Gothic lettering, with two regimental badges flanking the fourth line:

In memory of / Sir Walter George Barttelot, 2nd Bart. / J.P., D.L., C.C. for the County of Sussex, Major in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteer Battalion / Royal Sussex Regiment. / He was selected to command the Sussex Vol.<sup>r</sup> / Company when ordered to South Africa in / the year 1900, and was attached to the 1st Batt.<sup>n</sup> / Royal Sussex Regiment. In the desperate / assault on the Boer position at Retief's Nek / on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1900 he fell gallantly at the head / of his Company, mourned by his Regiment / and friends as one of the bravest soldiers who / gave their lives for their Queen and Country. / The Officers who served with him in the 2nd Vol.<sup>r</sup> / Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment have / caused this tablet to be erected commemorating / him and their great loss.

*Heraldry:* Barttelot quartering Stopham, impaling Balfour; Swan and tower crests.

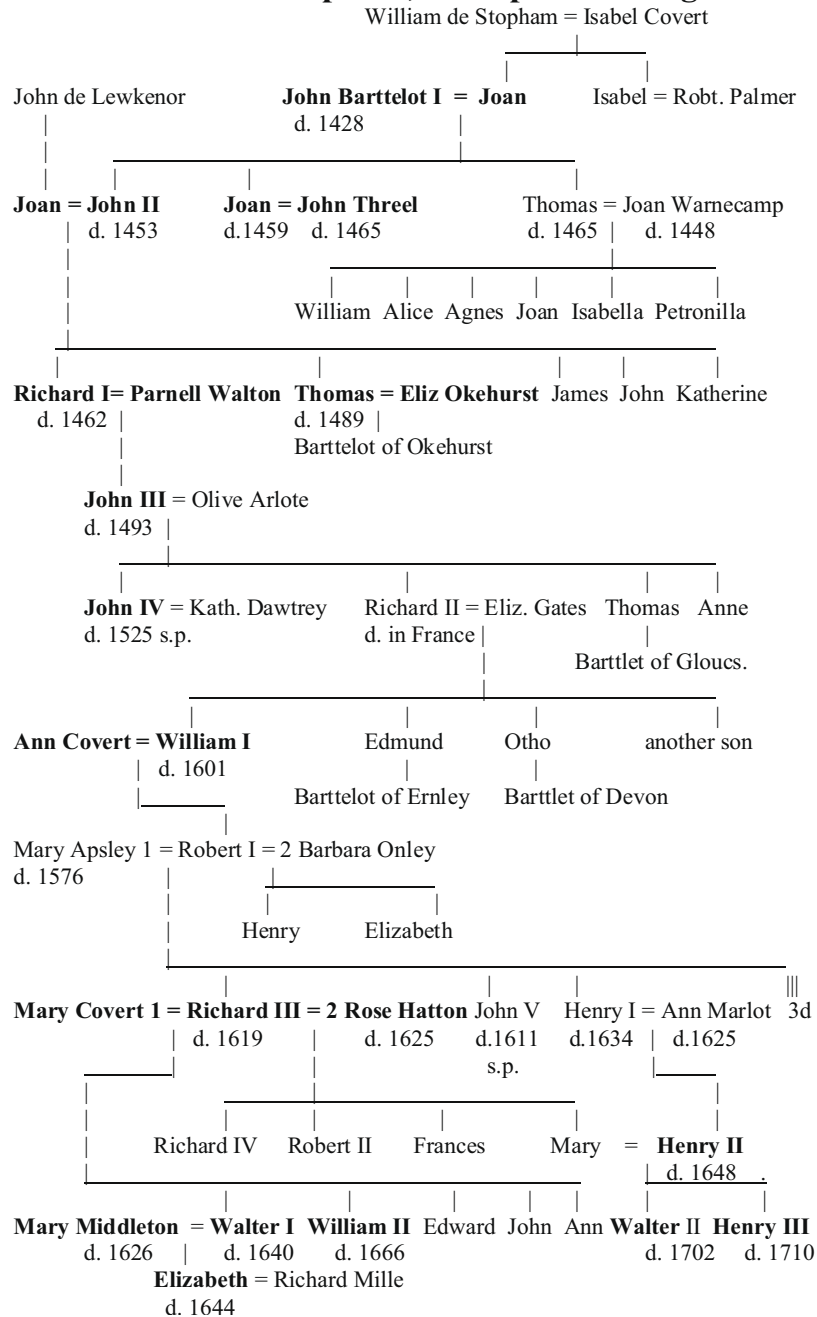
The third and fourth Baronets, Sir Walter Barttelot X 1880-1918, and Sir Walter Barttelot XI, 1904-1944, have circular white marble tablets with small relief bronze regimental badges, on the north wall of the nave. Then there is one solitary brass to a non-member of the family, Sir Cyril Shakerley, 1970, before we come to:

### **XXV. Coldstream Guards colours, 1985**

The fifth and present Baronet, Sir Brian Barttelot, is mentioned on the latest of the brasses, a plate 200 x 300 mm, on the north wall of the Nave, east of the window:

Above hang old Queens and Regimental Colours / of the First Battalion Coldstream Guards / Presented by Her Majesty the Queen / at Windsor Castle in April 1976 / They saw service in / West Germany, Belfast, Canada and / in South Armagh, Cyprus and the Falkland Islands / whilst the Battalion was under the

## Barttelot of Stopham, a Simplified Pedigree



*Fig. 19. Simplified pedigree of Barttelot of Stopham*

command of / Lieutenant Colonel Sir Brian Barttelot / 5<sup>TH</sup> Baronet of Stopham / These Colours are laid to rest in this church on / 11<sup>TH</sup> December 1985.

Here, at least for the time being, the series ends.

### Armorial

AGUILLON: *Gules a fleur-de-lys argent.*

APSLEY: *Argent three bars gules, a canton ermine.*

BALFOUR: *..., on a chevron ... between three lions passant ..., an otter's head ...*

BARTTELOT: *Sable three gloves pendant argent, tasselled or.*

crests: (i) *a swan couchant, wings endorsed, argent;*

(ii) *a castle with three turrets sable.*

(for 'Barttelot ancient' see Stopham)

BETTESWORTH: *Azure a lion rampant per fess or and argent.*

BICKWORTH: *Vair a chief ermine.*

BOHUN: *Or a cross azure.*

BOLDERO: *Per pale argent and azure a saltire counterchanged.*

BURFORD: *Quarterly azure and gules a cross or, in first and second quarters a crosslet fitchy or.*

CAMOYS: *Or on a chief gules three plates.*

CHITTING: *Argent on a bend azure between two talbots' heads, three scallops argent.*

COOKE: *Gules two crescents or, a canton ermine.*

COVERT: *Gules a fess ermine between three martlets or.*

DAWTREY: *Azure five fusils conjoined in fess argent.*

D'OYLEY: *Gules three bucks' heads cabossed argent. (ancient) Or two bends azure.*

FITZALAN: *Gules a lion rampant or.*

HATTON: *Azure a chevron between three gerbs or.*

LEWKNOR: *Azure three chevrons argent.*

L'ISLE: *Or on a chief azure three lioncels rampant or.*

MACMORROUGH: *Sable three garbs argent.*

MALTRAVERS: *Sable a fret or.*

MARECHAL: *Party or and vert a lion rampant gules.*

MIDDLETON: *Argent a saltire engrailed sable.*

MILLE: *Of six pieces argent and sable, on each argent a bear sable.*

MUSGRAVE: *Azure six annulets or.*

PALMER: *Or two bars gules each charged with three trefoils slipped argent, in chief a greyhound courant sable.*

POWER: *Quarterly azure and ermine, on the first and fourth a leopard's face or.*

ROKESLEY: *Lozengy argent and gules, a fess sable.*

SMYTH: *Argent a unicorn's head erased gules, on a chief wavy azure three lozenges or.*

STONESTREET: *Argent on two bars sable three bulls' heads argent.*

STOPHAM: *Per pale, per fess indented, argent and gules, four crescents counterchanged. (used anciently for Barttelot)*

STRONGBOW: *Or five chevrons gules.*

SYDNEY: *Or a pheon azure.*

SYGHESTON: *Argent a double-headed eagle sable.*

THREEL: *Paly of eight gules and or.*

TREGOZ: *Azure four barrulets or, in chief a leopard or.*

VAWER: *Gules a fess argent between three leopards' heads or.*

WALTON: *Argent three cormorants' heads erect sable.*

# The Brass to the Revd. Montague Henry Noel, d. 1929, St. Barnabas, Oxford

David Meara

*Montague Henry Noel (1840-1929), the first vicar of the Anglo-Catholic church of St. Barnabas, Oxford, is commemorated there by a brass designed by Cecil Hare. The process of commissioning the brass, which was installed in 1931, is well documented.*

The church of St Barnabas, Oxford, was built in 1868-9 at the expense of Thomas Combe, Printer to the University, largely to serve the spiritual needs of the workers at the Oxford University Press, many of whom lived in the area called Jericho around the imposing Press building in Walton Street. Thomas Combe was an ardent member of the Tractarian movement and a supporter of the subsequent ritual revival, which promoted the reintroduction of medieval ceremonial, vestments, furniture, and fittings within the Church of England.

The architect of the church was Arthur Blomfield (1829-1899), who designed a building in the style of an Italian Romanesque basilica. There are fittings in the church by some of the major ecclesiastical firms and designers of the time, in particular Heaton, Butler and Bayne.<sup>1</sup>

The first vicar of the church was the Revd. Montague Henry Noel (Fig. 2), who was born at Teston, Kent, on 18 December 1840, the fifth son of the Honble. and Revd. Francis James Noel, rector of Teston.<sup>2</sup> He matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, on 10 June 1859,

obtained his Oxford BA in 1864 and was ordained deacon in the same year, serving as curate at Caldicot in the Diocese of Monmouth before moving in 1865, after his ordination as priest to Wantage in Berkshire, where he served under the Revd. W.J. Butler (d. 1894).<sup>3</sup> Butler was a fellow Tractarian who founded the Community of St. Mary the Virgin at Wantage and is commemorated in the chancel of the convent chapel by a large mural brass showing him in eucharistic vestments under a canopy with shields and inscription.<sup>4</sup>

Noel was appointed vicar of St. Barnabas in 1869 and served there until 1899. A scrapbook which he kept during these years and which is preserved in the archives at St. Barnabas is full of contemporary photographs and prints of his circle of Tractarian and ritualist friends and clergy. These include a group photograph of the clergy at St. Alban's, Holborn, London; Fr. R.M. Benson of Cowley, the founder of the Society of St. John the Evangelist; the Revd. A.D. Wagner, vicar of St. Paul's, Brighton; the Revd. H.A. Walker, curate of St Alban's, Holborn, who succeeded the notorious Fr. Arthur Tooth at St. James's, Hatcham in 1878; the Revd. William Upton Richards, of All Saints, Margaret Street; the Revd. John Mason Neale, of East Grinstead; the Revd. Henry Parry Liddon, Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral; and Fr. Charles Lowder of St. Peter's, London Docks.

1 J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner, *Oxfordshire* (Harmondsworth, 1974), pp. 289-91.

2 *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage*, 107th edn., 3 vols (Wilmington, Del., 2003), II, p. 1505. Montague Henry Noel was a nephew of the 1st Earl of Gainsborough of the 1841 creation. Other uncles were the evangelical Revd. Gerard Thomas Noel and the Baptist minister Baptist Wriothsley Noel. The hymn writer Caroline Maria Noel was a cousin, and the

Revd. Conrad Noel, vicar of Thaxted, was a first cousin once removed.

3 J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1888), II, p. 1026.

4 W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Berkshire* (London, 1993), p. 151; D. Meara, *Modern Memorial Brasses* (Donington, 2008), pp. 44-5, 257.



Fig. 1. Montague Henry Noel, d. 1929, St. Barnabas, Oxford  
(rubbing: Derrick Chivers)

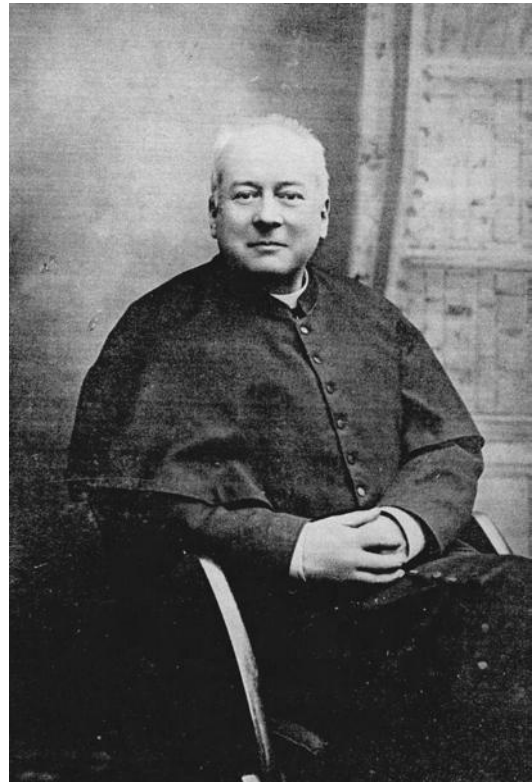


Fig. 2. Photograph of Montague Henry Noel, St. Barnabas, Oxford

Thomas Combe and Montague Noel were determined that St. Barnabas should stand firmly within the Catholic tradition of the Church of England. Thomas Hardy, who had been a pupil in Blomfield's architectural office in the early 1860s, described the church in *Jude the Obscure* as St. Silas, 'the church of ceremonies,' with its fumes of incense which clung to the clothes of the congregation.<sup>5</sup>

Francis Kilvert was in Oxford on Ascension Day 1876 and described the ceremonies in his diary in disparaging terms, speaking of the

5 J. Sherwood, *A Guide to the Churches of Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1989) p. 143.

celebrant, who may well have been Noel himself, as ‘the emaciated ghost in the black biretta and golden chasuble’.<sup>6</sup>

St. Barnabas is included in the catalogue of churches listed in the *Tourist's Church Guide* of 1874, an early attempt to record those churches which used lighted candles and Eucharistic vestments.<sup>7</sup> In the same year the Public Worship Regulation Act was passed, a somewhat vain attempt to keep ritualistic practices in check. There is no doubt that by the turn of the century strong battle lines had been drawn, and some ritualist clergy were even imprisoned for defying their bishops. John Kensit, prominent Protestant agitator, campaigned aggressively against Catholic practices and sent his henchmen around the country to gather evidence.

In his history of the Catholic Revival in the Church of England in the twentieth century Dom Anselm Hughes recounts an anecdote about Fr. Montague Noel, when he was catechising the children in the congregation during a festival Mass. He saw three men at the back of the church and made the children stare at them so that they left the building. They were undoubtedly Kensit's men.<sup>8</sup>

Hughes adds that Noel was still alive when he was an undergraduate at Oxford and, though no longer vicar, preached at St. Barnabas, where he made the congregation rock with laughter as he spoke about those who wished to take the ‘nots’ out of the Ten

Commandments and put them in the Athanasian Creed.<sup>9</sup>

Montague Noel resigned the living of St. Barnabas in 1899, having been vicar for thirty years. His entry in *Crockford's Clerical Directory* for 1929 states that he had a licence to preach in the Diocese of Llandaff from 1905 to 1915 and in the Diocese of London from 1916 to 1927, leaving unexplained gaps, which suggest that he may have had to resign from St. Barnabas on grounds of ill health.<sup>10</sup> He died on 29 October 1929.<sup>11</sup> After a Requiem Mass at St. Mary Magdalen's, Munster Square, London, he was buried at Frinsted, Kent.<sup>12</sup> Shortly afterwards the Church Council appointed a committee to decide on a suitable form of memorial to their first vicar.<sup>13</sup>

At the first meeting convened on 18 December 1929, with the vicar, the Revd. A.G. Bisdee, in the chair, various suggestions were made. These included completing the Chapel of St. George, beautifying the Lady Chapel, the founding of an organ scholarship, and commissioning a tomb with recumbent effigy. Miss Drinkwater, a member of the committee, made the suggestion of an engraved brass, ‘with painted figure’, to be placed in the choir.

Because of the variety of suggestions the vicar felt obliged to consult the Parochial Church Council, after which the following resolution was passed and then discussed at the meeting of the Memorial Committee on 12 February 1936:

6 See Meara, *Modern Memorial Brasses*, pp. 25-6 for a fuller quotation from Kilvert.

7 N. Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain 1830-1910* (Oxford, 1999), p. 402.

8 A. Hughes, *The Rivers of the Flood* (London, 1961), pp. 29-30.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

10 The 1901 Census records him as living at 13 St. Barnabas Street, Oxford. In *Crockford's Clerical Directory*

for 1904 his address is given as 5 Warwick Square, London, S.W.

11 Notebook of Tom Tyler, sacristan of St. Barnabas (1907-1957), held in the church safe.

12 *The Times*, 31 Oct, 1929.

13 This information is taken from a file of material in the archives at St. Barnabas, marked ‘Memorial to Fr. Noel 1929-31’.

1. The Council, while generally approving the suggestions of the Committee, does not regard a tomb with an alabaster figure as a suitable memorial to Father Noel, but a large majority approved of an engraved brass to be placed in the choir, being part of the memorial.
2. That the Committee be asked to consider the enlargement of the Priest's vestry in addition to the brass if funds were available.

After further discussion it was formally approved that a brass with a life-size figure of Fr. Noel engraved upon it should be placed in the choir and that Mr. Hare should be asked to submit a design.

Cecil Greenwood Hare (1875-1932) was an architect trained by George Frederick Bodley and Thomas Garner, who worked both in their architectural practice and at Watts and Co., Church Furnishers, where he became the chief designer of embroidery. On Bodley's death in 1907 Hare continued to run the office at 11 Gray's Inn Square, W.C.1, styling the firm Bodley and Hare on his headed notepaper.

Cecil Hare submitted a design by the beginning of May 1930, which was considered by the Memorial Committee at its meeting on 7 May. Sadly the original design, which used to be held in the file, has been subsequently removed and its present whereabouts are unknown.

The design of the brass (Fig. 1) consists of a figure in Mass vestments holding a chalice and standing on a pavement, surrounded by a broad border with acanthus leaf pattern, two shields and Evangelists' symbols in the corners. The inscription underneath reads:

*Orate pro anima / Montague Henrici Noel / qui annos XXX hanc ecclesiam / parochus primus / insigni pietate moderatus / Obdormivit in Christo / die XXIX<sup>mo</sup>. mens, Octobr. A.S. MCMXXIX / Cuius animae propitietur Deus.*



Fig. 3 Red chasuble, made in 1906, depicted on the brass  
(photo.: Derrick Chivers)

The Committee agreed that the chasuble should be based on the red High Mass Chasuble (Fig. 3) and the chalice based on the Russian chalice (Fig. 4), both items associated with Fr. Noel, and still in the possession of St. Barnabas. The face of the figure is based on the photograph which still hangs in the vestry (Fig. 2). The Treasurer reported that he had so far received £128 towards the memorial. Hare wrote again on 13 May, agreeing with the Committee's recommendations and promising to send an estimate of costs. He also suggested that the memorial should be made in bronze rather than brass: 'This would need no cleaning and always look like an old one.'

Hare followed this letter with another dated 22 May 1930 in which he set out the estimated costs of the brass. These were as follows:



**St. Barnabas, Oxford**

## Estimate No. 1.

Bronze Figure & Border & enamel, All as scale drawing including Inscription & Emblems, etc.	£175. 0. 0.
Marble Slab in Black	38. 0. 0.
Fixing & taking up floor & screeding, etc.	10. 0. 0.
	-----
	£223. 0. 0.
Architects, Fees, etc.	20. 0. 0.
	-----
	£243. 0. 0.
	-----

## Estimate No. 2.

If the Memorial Brass is Reduced in size to 6' 6" x 3' 6", but otherwise as scale drawing.	£147. 0. 0.
Marble Slab in Black	38. 0. 0.
Fixing & taking up floor & screeding, etc.	10. 0. 0.
	-----
	£195. 0. 0.
Architects, Fees, etc.	20. 0. 0.
	-----
	£215. 0. 0.
	-----

Note. If the enamels are omitted, the  
Above estimate would be reduced by  
£30. 0. 0.

Hare gives two estimates, for a larger and a smaller version, the work to be carried out in bronze, 'and I have obtained the estimate from first class craftsmen who have carried out work of this nature for me before.' Unfortunately, he does not specify who they might be, but probably Barkentin and Krall, who did most of Bodley's metalwork.



*Fig. 4. Russian silver chalice, from Pyluky, dated 1658, given by the 2nd Earl of Gainsborough in 1869, and depicted on the brass (photo.: Derrick Chivers)*

The next letter in the file, from Hare to Fr. Bisdee, the vicar, is dated 11 November 1930. Clearly the parish had been struggling to raise sufficient funds, which in May stood at £158. 10s. 6d. Hare suggested omitting the enamelling on the evangelists' symbols and shields, and reducing the size of the plate to 6 ft. long. He stated that he could get the work done for £151, including fixing and his fees, and 'so I have ventured to have the work put in hand, which I hope is in accordance with your wishes'.

The Parochial Church Council then proceeded to apply for a Faculty, having formally

approved Hare's reduced design and quotation on 3 December 1930. The Faculty Petition was lodged with the Registrar of the Diocese at the end of January 1931 and the matter was then referred to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for their comments. The proposal then ran into trouble because the DAC were clearly unhappy with the design. The Secretary reported to the Chancellor on 9 March:

The Committee feel quite unable to commend this design for acceptance. They regard the size, 9ft. 4ins x 4ft. 8ins as excessive,<sup>14</sup> the drawing of the figure and vestments as clumsy, and the Renaissance-style floral border with the parchment roll and handle below as quite unsuitable. They would recommend that the floral border and two shields together with the roll and space for inscription be eliminated. The inscription with the four symbols at the corners could then be set as a border all round the figure, as in ancient brasses. This arrangement would reduce the length of the brass by about 16 inches which is desirable. The AC approved the wording of the inscription but suggest that Montague be rendered in Latin as *Montacuti*. They would request to see a fresh drawing on these lines.

The design was returned to the parish and the Chancellor wrote to the vicar saying that he was adjourning consideration of the Petition so that the Petitioners may have an opportunity of considering the DAC's observations. He added: 'I think that the brass is unnecessarily large and that the inscription should run round the brass in place of the border ... I see no objection to the figure or the vestments'. The vicar, Fr. Bisdee, replied on 18 April:

As regards the size of the brass the point which you and the advisory committee make has

already been met and owing to consideration of cost the brass has already been reduced from 9 ft to 6 ft ... As regards the general design, the floral border and the inscription on a scroll below the figure: the committee would very respectfully point out that they had gone into these questions most carefully, several members having considerable experience and expert knowledge of brasses – taking into consideration the space available and the position of the brass, the architecture and general style of decoration of the Church – and consulting a most distinguished and experienced architect in Mr. Hare – and they had deliberately adopted his design and agreed with his strongly expressed preference for a Renaissance as opposed to a Gothic brass. With Mr. Hare they consider that the type of border and inscription etc. are an essential feature of such a design: to alter it would entirely change the character of the brass and they could not willingly consent to do this. They would further point out that the Roman lettering proposed is not decorative as Gothic lettering is ... and that in the very limited space available there would be no room for anyone to walk round to read an inscription in the border whereas as designed it will be plain for all to see. They venture therefore very earnestly to hope that the design may be sanctioned as it stands with the smaller size already arranged for: that Mr. Hare's name – to say nothing of various eminent members of the committee in charge – may be considered sufficient guarantee against anything unsuitable being placed in the Church.

It is clear from a letter from Cecil Hare to Fr. Bisdee written three days later that the engraving of the brass was well advanced and that Hare was not prepared to make any changes. Fortunately the Chancellor was

<sup>14</sup> This is clearly the original design (i.e. Estimate 1) and not that which Hare had agreed with the PCC.

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supportive of the parish's wishes and he wrote to Fr. Bisdee on 28 April 1931: 'Thank you for your letter of 18 April and the very full information given therein. I am happy to say that it has enabled me to grant, as I have done, a Citation for the design as put forward ....'. The Chancellor, Sir Edward Hansell, added: 'I cannot help adding that having known and revered and loved the first Vicar ever since 1875 I should have deeply regretted any controversy respecting his memorial.'<sup>15</sup>

This judgement resolved the matter and the finished memorial was duly laid down in the chancel of St. Barnabas. An entry in the sacristan Tom Tyler's notebook for 1931 states: 'The Brass in the Chancel to the memory of the

Revd. Montague Henry Noel first Vicar of St. Barnabas was dedicated on Sunday June 21 by the Rt. Revd. Bishop Charles Gore, after preaching at High Mass.'

Its Renaissance style is well suited to the Italianate style of the church and vindicates the convictions of both the architect and the memorial committee. It is a fine product of twentieth-century design and manufacture, and the accompanying documentation gives a fascinating insight into the process of commissioning such a memorial.

The author expresses grateful thanks to Derrick Chivers for his rubbing of the brass.

15 The above are transcripts of documents in the Faculty papers for St. Barnabas Church (ref. oxf dioc c. 1925/1) deposited in the Oxfordshire Record Office.

# Conservation of brasses, 2011

## William Lack

This is the twenty-seventh report on conservation which I have prepared for the *Transactions*. Thanks are due to Martin Stuchfield for invaluable assistance with the brasses at Denham, Hutton and Standon and for funding the production of facsimiles at Denham and Hutton; to Leslie Smith for assistance at Rainham; and to the incumbents of all the churches concerned. Generous financial assistance has been provided by the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation and the Monumental Brass Society at Denham and Hutton.

### Denham, Suffolk

**M.S.I.** Anthony Bedingfield, *c.* 1580. This London G (Daston style, script 11) brass, comprising an armoured effigy (622 x 238 mm, thickness 2.9 mm, 7 rivets) and a three-line Latin inscription (79 x 489 mm, thickness 2.0 mm, 5 rivets), had been loose in the vestry for about forty years.<sup>1</sup> It was originally laid in a Purbeck slab (1680 x 975 mm) which is in excellent condition and lies (oriented north-south) on the floor of the sanctuary under the altar table. The plates were collected from the church on 12 November 2007.

The effigy was discovered to be palimpsest by 1900, the reverse being cut from a Flemish brass. It shows the lower part of three effigies and part of a Latin inscription to Jacob Wegheschede, 1515, and links with reverses found at Yealmpton, Devon (1580, LSW.III) and Cheam Surrey (1579, M.S.VIII).<sup>2</sup>

1 The brass was recorded as loose in the church chest in 1827 by the antiquary Elisha Davy. The male effigy was stolen during the 1870s, but recovered and fastened down by 1901. By 1974 the brass was recorded as being loose in the vestry.

2 J. Page-Phillips, *Palimpsests: The Backs of Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols. (London, 1980), p. 68 and pl. 114.

3 W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex*, 2 vols. (London, 2003), I, pp. 388-9.

After cleaning I produced facsimiles of the palimpsest reverses and mounted these on a cedar board together with facsimiles of the linking reverses and a commemorative plate. I fitted new rivets to the brass and this was relaid in its slab on 5 October 2011. The board carrying the facsimiles was subsequently mounted in the chancel.

### Hutton, Essex<sup>3</sup>

**LSW.I.** Man in armour and wife, *c.* 1525. This London (F debased) brass, comprising an armoured effigy (414 x 118 mm, thickness 5.2 mm, 3 rivets), a female effigy (408 x 120 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, 3 rivets), a group of eight sons (170 x 176 mm, thickness 3.2 mm, 3 sons) and a group of eight daughters (178 x 98 mm, thickness 4.0 mm, 2 rivets), was removed from its original slab on the south wall of the south chapel on 24 August 2009.<sup>4</sup> The group of sons was found to be palimpsest, the showing part of a London B female effigy, *c.* 1460.<sup>5</sup> After cleaning I produced a resin facsimile of the palimpsest reverse, repaired a fracture in the group of sons and fitted new rivets to the brass. It was rebated into a cedar board together together with the resin facsimile and a commemorative plate.

**LSW.II.** Inscription (effigy lost) to George White, 1584. This London G four-line English inscription (110 x 493 mm, thickness 1.8 mm, 8 rivets) was removed from a recess on the west wall of the South Chapel on 24 August 2009.<sup>6</sup>

4 The brass was formerly situated on the chancel floor of the Old Church. It was recorded by William Holman, in *c.* 1719, who noted the loss of the inscription and one shield. When the present Church was built in 1873 the original slab was mounted in the wall.

5 Illustrated in *MBS Bulletin* 114 (May 2010), p. 270.

6 It was formerly laid in the chancel. When recorded by Holman the effigy was already lost.

It had been secured with large domed screws, and had been regularly polished. After cleaning I fitted new rivets and rebated the plate into a cedar board.

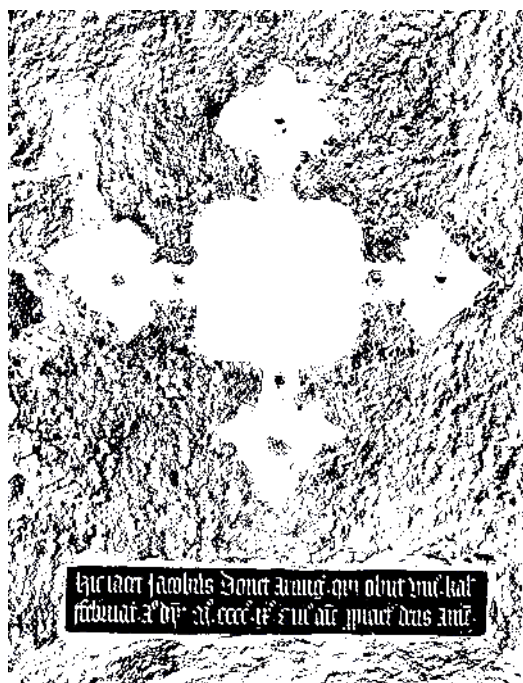
The two boards were mounted on 10 February 2011 on the south and west walls of the south chapel.

### Rainham, Kent

Parts of five brasses were taken up from their slabs in the chancel on 8 June 2011.<sup>7</sup>

**LSW.I.** James Donet, 1409 (Fig. 1). This London B brass, now comprising a two-line Latin inscription (81 x 513 mm, thickness 2.5 mm, 3 rivets), was taken up from the original Purbeck slab (2010 x 985 mm) in the chancel. The plate had become fractured across the central rivet hole and was loose and vulnerable. The slab bears an indent for a foliated cross (525 x 510 mm). The inscription proved to be palimpsest, the reverse being a complete inscription in French to Letice de Wate, formerly wife of Thomas ate Wyche, engraved c. 1380, possibly from St. Martin Orgar in London.<sup>8</sup> After cleaning I produced a resin mould of the palimpsest reverse, repaired the fracture with a soldered brass backing-plate and fitted new rivets.

**LSW.II** (Formerly M.S.III). William Aucher, 1514. This Kent workshop brass, comprising an armoured effigy (460 x 150 mm), a three-line Latin inscription (120 x 510 mm) and four shields, has been relaid in a modern slab. The only part conserved was the lower left-hand shield (143 x 125 mm, thickness 3.8 mm, 1 rivet) which had become proud of the slab. After cleaning I fitted a new rivet.



*Fig. 1. James Donet, 1409 (LSW.I)  
Rainham, Kent  
(rubbing: Jane Houghton and Janet Whitham)*

**LSW.III** (Formerly M.S.IV). William Bloor, 1529. This London G brass, comprising a civilian effigy (865 x 266 mm, thickness 4.3 mm, 8 rivets) and a four-line Latin inscription (134 x 626 mm, thickness 2.2 mm, 3 rivets), was removed from the original slab (2045 x 1165 mm). After cleaning I repaired a damaged area in the inscription and fitted new rivets.

**LSW.IV** (Formerly M.S.V). Lady and four daughters, c.1530. These two plates are all that survive of this Kent-style brass which originally comprised the effigies of a civilian and three wives, a foot inscription and two groups of children. The surviving female effigy (322 x

<sup>7</sup> The brasses have been given 'LSW numbers' following a survey undertaken for the forthcoming *County Series* volume.

<sup>8</sup> Illustrated in *MBS Bulletin*, 118 (October 2011), p. 350.



Fig. 2. John Norden, 158-, and four wives (LSW.V)  
Rainham, Kent  
(rubbing: Jane Houghton and Janet Whitham)

117 mm, thickness 1.7 mm, 3 rivets) had become very loose and I removed it from the original slab (1980 x 920 mm). After cleaning I repaired a fracture and fitted new rivets.

**LSW.V** (Formerly M.S.VI). John Norden, 158-, and four wives (Fig. 2). This London G brass, now comprising a civilian effigy (530 x 175 mm), the right-hand female effigy (502 x 157 mm, thickness 1.9 mm, 4 rivets), a three-line English inscription (87 x 875 mm, engraved on three plates with thicknesses 3.5, 3.2 and 4.0 mm, 5 rivets), two groups of two sons (left-hand 142 x 81 mm, thickness 1.6 mm, 2 rivets; right-hand 148 x 79 mm, thickness 1.7 mm, 2 rivets) (varying from 1.6 to 1.8 mm), the upper right-hand shield (137 x 113 mm) and the mutilated lower left-hand shield (now 70 x 115 mm, engraved on two plates with thicknesses 3.1 and 2.7 mm, 1 rivet), lies in the original Purbeck slab (2185 x 945 mm). Two other female effigies, a group of children and two other shields are lost. When the plates were taken up it was found that the inscription, groups of sons and the mutilated shield were palimpsest. The reverses of the three parts of the inscription are all cut from Flemish brasses and show canopy work, *c.* 1340,<sup>9</sup> which links directly with a fragment at Paston, Norfolk on the reverse of the brass to Erasmus Paston, *c.* 1580 (M.S.I),<sup>10</sup> and two sections of separate border inscriptions,

*c.* 1500. The reverses of the sons link together to form part of an English inscription, dated 1545, and the reverse of the mutilated shield shows part of an early effigy, perhaps *c.* 1400. The female effigy shows hammer marks on the reverse and had previously been relaid. After cleaning I produced resin facsimiles of the palimpsest reverses, rejoined the three parts of the inscription and fitted new rivets.

The brasses were relaid on 4 October 2011. The facsimiles from LSW.I and V were mounted on a cedar board together with a descriptive plate and this was affixed to the south chancel wall on 24 February 2012.

#### **Standon, Hertfordshire**

**LSW.III.** John Feld, 1474, and son John, [1477]. This well-known London F brass, comprising a civilian effigy, armoured effigy, seven individual children, four shields and a mutilated chamfer inscription, is laid on an altar tomb in the north aisle.<sup>11</sup> A fragment of marginal inscription inscribed ‘Stapull of Caley’s the wh’ (297 x 41 mm, thickness 2.7 mm, 2 rivets) had become detached about 25 years ago. It was collected on 10 September 2009. It had become fractured into two pieces. After cleaning I repaired the fracture and fitted new rivets. It was relaid in the slab on 13 June 2011.

9 The Paston reverse was dated by Page-Phillips as *c.* 1420. However the background on the Rainham fragment is rectilinear in Cameron’s ‘Pattern1’, indicating that it was engraved much earlier, as found on the brasses at Ringsted (1319), Seville (1333) and Schwerin (1341), see H.K. Cameron, ‘The 14th-Century School of Flemish Brasses’, *MBS Trans.*, XI, pt. 2 (1970), p. 56.

10 This link is illustrated in *MBS Bulletin*, 118 (October 2011), p. 350.

11 Illustrated in W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Hertfordshire* (Stratford St. Mary, 2009), p. 591.

# Reviews

Ronald Van Belle, *Laudas Flamencas en España: 'Flemish' Monumental Brasses in Spain* (Bilbao: Ediciones Beta III Milenio, 2011); 282 pp., 84 b/w illus.; €25 (paperback); ISBN 978-84-92629-41-1 (Spanish with English summary).

As the title denotes, this is a comprehensive study of all the Flemish monumental brasses found in Spain, currently ten in total, some of which have not been previously published in the studies by Dr. Cameron and W.J. Hemp. Van Belle combines detailed descriptions of the images represented in the brasses and their provenance with a historical analysis of the subjects represented and how the patrons might have come to commission a Flemish brass. The depth of his research combined with the many detailed illustrations makes this an excellent reference book and a pleasure to read.

The book starts with a short general overview describing how Flemish art was introduced to Spain, mainly through commerce and political patronage, and its great popularity among those who could afford it. Chapter Two discusses the written evidence for the origin of Flemish brasses and their centres of production in Tournai, Ghent and Bruges during the fourteenth century. Surprisingly, to date no contract has been identified in Belgium relating to the export of brasses during the fourteenth century, yet Van Belle argues convincingly that Bruges must also have produced brasses during this earlier period since evidence of both production and export can be found in wills, records of confiscated goods, brass inscriptions and accounting records. He attributes the comparative lack of written evidence relating to production in Bruges to the fact that records of private contracts were kept by courts whose registers survive only after 1484.

Chapter Three discusses in detail the technical aspects of Flemish brasses and the evolution in

their design from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Brasses became gradually simpler and more realistic, with more expressive faces and the introduction of designs to create a greater three-dimensional effect, using different line engraving techniques to create a variety of textures in the skin and clothing of the figures as well as to suggest shadows and folds. The elaborate narrative scenes at the bottom of earlier brasses slowly disappeared, fierce lions and dogs gave way to more pacific ones, and the traditional canopy above the figures was replaced by a symbolic arch, occasionally with coats of arms in the corners.

Chapters Four to Seven are dedicated to the Flemish monumental brasses found in Spain, including those now lost, and discuss the written and physical evidence for their production. The brasses are generally smaller in size than other Flemish brasses and Van Belle attributes this to their cost, concluding that it reflects a less ostentatious buyer. Those representing merchants generally lack dates, and thus were probably ordered during the client's lifetime, perhaps years before their death, whereas some brasses representing clergy appear to have been ordered after their death. Van Belle gives a very detailed description and commentary of each of the ten currently existing Flemish brasses (Chapter Six) and estimates that seven or perhaps eight other Flemish brasses once existed but have now been lost. The ten existing brasses include four previously unpublished brasses: two in the Basque village of Lekeitio and two in the museum of Bilbao. The two brasses in Lekeitio, currently on the interior wall of St. Anne's chapel in the basilica of Santa María de la Asunción, represent two different couples: a knight in armour and his wife, María Ibáñez de Uribarren (produced *c.* 1380), and the merchant Joan Peris de Ormaegy (d. *c.* 1382-91) and his wife, Auria Martínez de Ceranta (d. 1381). The brasses in Bilbao



represent the single figure of Martín Ochoa de Vildosola (d. 1401), originally in the now vanished church of Santa María de Castillo, and the beautiful brass of the merchant Pedro López de Vitoria and his wife María Sánchez de Salinas (d. *c.* 1500 but produced *c.* 1486), which is represented on the book cover. Van Belle also includes in his list three additional lost brasses, one representing Fernando Rodríguez Pecha (d. 1435), head of the household to King Alfonso XI, in the San Salvador chapel in Guadalajara, another brass which may have covered a stone tomb ordered by Samuel El Levi (d. 1369), treasurer to King Peter the Cruel, and one in Solsona dedicated to the merchant Pere Cirera (d. 1419). The tomb for Samuel El Levi is of particular interest given that it is the only instance in which there is written proof of its Flemish origin and how it came to be in Spain. The accounts of Fernán García de Santillán, a merchant from Seville, state that he sent the stone for Don Samuel to Seville 'as promised to him'. Although there is no mention of a brass, Van Belle concludes that there must have been one since there would have been little sense in sending a simple funeral stone all the way from Flanders. However, since El Levi was Jewish, the brass could not have included his figure. Appendix One lists a total of thirty-three existing and lost monumental brasses in Spain, specifying the name of the subject, the date of death, the date of engraving, a general description, Van Belle's opinion on the origin of the brass (local or Flemish), and the place where it is currently displayed.

The strength of this book lies in the commentary accompanying the detailed descriptions of the brasses, as well as the many full-page black and white reproductions that include close-ups of relevant details and, where applicable, images of brasses with similar characteristics found elsewhere in Europe.

Van Belle's extensive research of documentary sources and other Flemish brasses in England and the Continent makes his case studies a valuable source of information for historians and provides for very interesting reading. We learn not only about the particular design of each brass and the symbolism involved in its iconography, but also, in most cases, the identity of the subjects and how they might have come to be represented in a brass executed in Flanders.

The extensive inclusion of comparisons with other brasses allows the reader to understand the common patterns in Flemish brasses and admire the intricacy and sophistication of their design. Thus we learn that the luxurious dress with multiple folds gathered on one side represented in the brass of the unknown 'wife of Francisco Fernandez' (d. 1333), in Seville, looks remarkably similar to that represented in the figure of Margaret de Walsokne (*c.* 1349) in King's Lynn, and that the hunting scenes in the foot panels represented in the Urizarren brass, in Lekeitio, share many characteristics with those represented in the now destroyed brass of Johan Clingenberg (d. 1356) in Lübeck, and the brass representing Michiel van Assenede (d. 1382), formerly in Bruges. Van Belle accompanies these comparisons with comments on the provenance and significance of the diverse images represented both in the central figures and in the background of each brass, discussing their evolution and the common themes found in other Flemish works of art. Dogs and lions placed under the feet of the deceased evolve from symbols of evil that need to be crushed (from Psalm 90.13), as represented in the brass of Martín Ferrandes (d. 1371) in Castro Urdiales, to the more conventional symbols of faithfulness and bravery represented in the brass of María Ibáñez and her husband in Lekeitio. The figures of animals, half dragon, half lion,

vomiting foliage that are represented on the cushion under the head of Pedro Zatrilla resemble the lions vomiting foliage that appear in oriental iconography and later appear in baptismal fonts, symbolizing the fight between Christ and Satan.

The only significant weakness in Van Belle's study lies in his attempt to identify all of the figures in the Spanish brasses using primary sources and, at times, a large dose of conjecture. Although his research is impressive, his enthusiastic desire to find evidence of provenance sometimes leads to unlikely conclusions. It is also unfortunate that the English translation at the end of the book is presented in summarized form, as it misses much of the detail that makes the study so interesting and informative to the reader as well as being misleading in places where the translator failed to include sufficient related information. Overall, however, this is a valuable reference book that updates previous studies previously on the subject, written in a simple straightforward manner that makes it good introductory reading as well as adding to the knowledge of those already well versed in its themes.

**Lucia Diaz Pascual**

Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie Knöll ed., *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011); xxiii + 449 pp., 116 b/w illus., 16 colour illus., index; £59.99 (hardback); ISBN 978-1-4438-2900-7.

There are few phenomena as puzzling as the 'macabre'. Almost a hundred years ago, Johan Huizinga argued that the proliferation of cadaverous imagery across Western Europe in the later Middle Ages was evidence of the decline of medieval culture. Even today Huizinga's name is cited without reservation by

some scholars and we still lack comprehensive debate on regional variations or detailed studies of the most popular macabre tropes. *Mixed Metaphors*, edited by Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie Knöll, is therefore not only welcome – it is long overdue. The story of the *danse macabre* often begins with a sequence of images painted on the cemetery walls of Les Saints Innocents, Paris, in c. 1424-25. A range of social castes were depicted, from Pope to infant, led in dance by skeletal figures. However, whilst the main focus of the volume is the *danse macabre*, its scope is much broader, incorporating a range of verbal and visual manifestations of death.

For scholars of medieval tomb monuments and commemoration, the macabre will be both familiar and frustrating. Gruesome depictions of cadavers on monuments are well attested (though we still lack an authoritative study of the cadaver memorial) but the traditional interpretation that such tombs served as *memento mori* (reminders to the living about the imminence of death) appears to be at odds with the function of the medieval tomb, that is, to secure intercessory prayers for the deceased. Though the two were not incompatible – investment in the parish often served a reciprocal function benefiting the living and the dead – Paul Binski's earlier claim that the cadaver tomb was 'first and foremost a donnish conceit' endures. Members will therefore be interested in two essays in the volume which deal with representations of death that relate to tomb monuments and commemoration.

Sophie Oosterwijk's 'Dance, Dialogue and Duality in the Medieval *Danse Macabre*' serves as a comprehensive introduction to the *danse macabre*. Dr. Oosterwijk's work on church monuments is well known and here she deconstructs the principal motifs of the *danse*, taking the reader on an extensive survey of death imagery in late medieval visual culture.

Her article includes some rather fascinating analysis of the relationship between the image of the cadaver and the loss of identity which draws on the tradition of the *transi* or cadaver tomb. Oosterwijk also refers to the similarity between the iconography of the *danse macabre* and the brass of John Rudyng, Archdeacon of Lincoln (d. 1481). Unfortunately the reproductions of the rubbing of the brass and photographic detail are rather too small for in-depth study. Of greater interest though will be the publication and translation of the lengthy Latin inscription on the brass.

Jean Wilson's 'The Kiss of Death: Death as a Lover in Early Modern English Literature and Art' includes a study of the 'monumental body'. Wilson's article suffers from a tendency to quote at great length from contemporary sources. Thus the reader is presented with examples of the role of death as a lover and the sexualization of corpses in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama without much analysis. Wilson reproduces the image of the brass of Joan Strode (d. 1649), noting as others have that death appears in the guise of a competitive suitor. Again the image is too small for close inspection. Three images of the monument of John Latch and his wife Sarah (d. 1644) at Churchill, Somerset, are also provided. This is a curious tomb which features a recumbent Latch opening his wife's funerary shroud and declaring: 'Lyveing and dead thou seest how heere wee lie / I doate on Death preparing how to die'. I do not agree with Wilson's view that the tomb represents Latch 'in love with Death itself' or that it is an 'eroticisation of the corpse', and would suggest rather that it reminds us just how difficult the macabre is to comprehend and how narrow our interpretation of *memento mori* often is. Surely the tomb was intended to demonstrate, and instruct others, that the love Latch and his wife shared was spiritual and would outlast the bodily frame even though the latter no longer prospered.

Other articles are worth exploring, and though they do not deal with commemoration they offer an interesting complement to the study of death in the later Middle Ages. The volume is well presented with a range of illustrations, including sixteen colour plates. The essays are wide ranging and the scholarship is pan-European, including work by postgraduates and established authorities. Ultimately, *Mixed Metaphors* sets out to raise questions and challenge assumptions, both about the *danse macabre* and the wider medieval culture of death. For a volume determined to challenge the status quo, few articles offer any startling or revelatory conclusions and one may be left with more questions than answers. Hopefully, therefore, *Mixed Metaphors* will open new channels of discussion for scholars looking at the many manifestations of death in medieval art, literature and liturgy.

**David Harry**

Charlotte A. Stanford, *Commemorating the Dead in Late Medieval Strasbourg – The Cathedral's Book of Donors and its Use (1320–1521)* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011); xx + 327 pp., 37 b/w illus.; £70.00 (hardback); ISBN 978-1-4094-0136-0.

From its title probably few of our members would give this book a second glance, so one of the purposes of this review is to introduce into these pages the concept of a 'book of donors' as a form of memorialization. As such, therefore, there is an affinity to a monumental brass, but in this case the 'book' was created to record donations – and crucially much more – towards the ongoing building projects of Strasbourg's cathedral.

The first chapter of Charlotte Stanford's meticulous study accounts for the construction and history of the 'Book of Donors'. This is an extraordinary medieval document now housed in the Strasbourg Municipal Archives,

comprising 368 folios inscribed with 6964 obituary entries dating from *c.* 1320 to 1520. These record the financial donations to what were essentially the cathedral's building campaigns – the *Oeuvre Notre-Dame* – made by Strasbourg's elite, as well as by members of the artisan and merchant classes. Their motivation was, of course, to ensure that prayers were said for the benefit of their souls, and is no different to villagers contributing to the obit roll in their parish church. At Strasbourg, however, as discussed in chapter two, this element of memorialization was expanded to encompass not only the usual verbal remembrance, but also how the 'Book' itself evolved into a physical artefact of commemoration, so that being named inside it invested those individuals with a select, corporate benefit. A chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary was specially constructed to accommodate the 'Book', capitalizing further on this function of communal memorialization, with a complex timetable of Masses for the benefactors based there, complete with singing, processions and the ringing of bells. The 'Book' was therefore at the epicentre – *was* the epicentre – of this continual rich combination of sensations and ceremony. The increasingly complex role of the 'Book' is reflected in the growing elaboration of the entries: early on they comprised a straightforward record of an individual's donation and their date of death; later, the donor's commemorative wishes were specified at much greater length. There emerged, therefore, a tripartite commemorative strategy, formed by an individual's entry in the 'Book of Donors', their corporate commemoration in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and their ultimate celebration in the completion of the cathedral's west front.

In the following chapter these separate but interlocking mechanisms of remembrance are

contextualized within the socio-political manoeuvring of the elite families of late-medieval Strasbourg. The author identifies a reduction in the number of donors by the start of the fifteenth century, traced to a greater need for finance to strengthen the city's fortifications, as well as a growing number of religious foundations in the city which forced a dilution in the worth of pious donations over which the cathedral had previously enjoyed the lion's share. The city's churches were, hence, increasingly sustained by families who preferred and cultivated a parochial identity, and, in the final chapter, an analysis of the obituaries founded in these parish churches, provides a fascinating contrast to the cathedral ceremonies focussed on the *Oeuvre Notre-Dame*.

Burial with the cathedral was rarely possible for the vast majority of citizens, so the opportunity for memorialization occasioned by the inclusion of their names in the 'Book of Donors', be the bequest ever so humble, was attractive. On the other hand, parish churches enjoyed less proscriptive burial regulations. Tombs were commonly commissioned therefore, and, interestingly, appear to have been involved in salvific Masses, whether they were located inside the church or in the parish cemetery. Hence, an entry in the 'Distribution Book' for the church of St Thomas reads, 'There shall be distributed 22 shillings equally with full vigils, and a visitation of (the tomb marked) DE from which the parish priest will collect 4 shillings for evening vigils and will sing a morning Mass for the dead. And he should light the tomb with two candles of one pound of wax. He should visit the tomb during the vigil and the Mass, and also of their souls'. Many similar written directions suggest that these documents were akin to a 'tomb directory' enabling the commissioned priests to locate the appropriate graves to be visited at anniversary Masses.

As we know very little of the minutiae about how ceremonies like anniversary Masses were organized, this book opens up an entirely new and exciting line of enquiry into medieval urban commemoration. Unfortunately, the author stops short of extending her analysis later into the sixteenth century, and does not cover the varying responses of the cathedral and churches to these traditional mechanisms of remembering the dead at the introduction of Protestantism. It is tantalising to wonder how, in the middle of sixteenth-century Strasbourg, memorialization adapted to fundamental politico-religious change, particularly when two neighbouring parish churches, remarkably, could co-exist for several decades exhibiting polemical theological differences.

That said, the book is nicely produced, well printed, and pleasant to handle and read. For the price however, some colour illustrations would have served better: over 300 pages of text discuss a unique, venerable manuscript, yet the only illustrations of it are in smudgy black and white, and those of the cathedral are no better. However this one *caveat* should not put anyone off as the author writes engagingly, and what could be an extremely dull topic finds life right from the beginning in her infectious enthusiasm for the 'Book'.

**Paul Cockerham**

Marie-Hélène Rousseau, *Saving the Souls of Medieval London: Perpetual Chantries at St. Paul's Cathedral, c. 1200-1548* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); xiv + 242 pp., 3 b/w illus.; £65.00 (hardback); ISBN 978-1-4094-0581-8.

Marie-Hélène Rousseau's new book on the chantries of London's St. Paul's Cathedral makes a valuable contribution to the history of religious life in medieval England and in particular draws attention to a different form

of commemoration. Founded by a wide range of people, including merchants, noblemen, and bishops, to provide for the celebration of Masses for the salvation of the living and the dead, chantries were an important feature of religious life in the city from c. 1200. The significance of Rousseau's book lies in its study of the development of chantries over several centuries, with a particular emphasis on the interaction and dynamics of administrative, social and religious factors. This complex perspective admirably sustains her central argument that the history of chantries is critical to our understanding of religious life in this period.

The book is organized into six sections. The first is concerned with the foundation of chantries in the cathedral. The most important group of founders were members of the cathedral itself, including bishops, deans, major canons and minor clergy. A smaller number of chantries were founded by non-members, including some clerics and members of the laity who were not connected with the cathedral. It would be useful to know more about the founders and how the chantries related to their other charitable and devotional activities. However, the purpose of this book is to study the chantries themselves, so Rousseau focuses instead on the process of chantry foundation. It is interesting that several of those who had a chantry at St. Paul's were also commemorated by a brass such as Dean Thomas de Eure (d. 1400), and Rousseau makes the point that 'the combination of chantry and tomb appears to have been seen as a customary as well as an intrinsic association, possibly supported by church authorities'. It is striking that some chantry founders, such as Walter Sherrington, used tablets at their chantries to remind their chantry priests who they were to pray for. Brasses too would have served as an *aide memoire* in this process.

Sections three and four focus on the impact of the chantry chaplains on the cathedral. The

proliferation of chantries brought about the addition of a large number of men to the cathedral community. These men needed places within the church to perform their duties, which entailed some reorganization of the interior of the cathedral. Chantry chaplains could use existing altars, but the consecration of a new altar might also be occasioned by the establishment of a chantry. A further complication was that founders' tombs were often located in proximity to the altars where the chantry priests celebrated Mass.

In section five Rousseau investigates the careers of the chantry priests and displays some exceptional prosopographical research. She has identified more than 800 chantry chaplains and gathered information about their place of origin and their backgrounds. St. Paul's drew men from as far as Wales and northern England. However, the most important contingent was local men from London and its immediate area. Rousseau includes an interesting discussion on their wills and in particular where these chantry priests

wanted to be buried. Pardon Churchyard, the site of the 1969 discovery of an indent to a priest from the early fourteenth century, was a particularly popular place of burial amongst the cathedral clergy. Unfortunately testamentary evidence does not reveal any extra-mural brasses. The final section of the book examines the impact of the Reformation on the chantries and their ultimate dissolution. When the chantries were dissolved, it brought about an important change to the spatial organization of the cathedral, but it also removed a distinctive group of men who had contributed in a wide variety of ways to the cathedral community for centuries.

In sum, this is a remarkable study that substantially adds to our understanding of the religious life of medieval England. The book will be of value to historians interested in commemoration, London, and medieval religion and culture more generally.

**John McEwan**

## Portfolio of Small Plates



*Fig. 1. Unknown military figure (d. 1440) and wife (incised slab), Everton, Nottinghamshire  
(photo.: Cameron Newham)*

**Fig. 1: Unknown military figure (d. 1440) and wife Joan (incised slab), Everton, Nottinghamshire.**

*Photograph by Cameron Newham.*

Although F.A. Greenhill's lists of incised slabs in England were very thorough, occasionally examples can be found which he missed. One such is the once-fine alabaster slab at Everton, Nottinghamshire, brought to my attention by Patrick Farman and Peter Hacker. The explanation for the uncharacteristic lapse of the part of Greenhill (or more likely his friend Beetlestone) is probably that, although it is now mounted murally in the tower, it was previously on the floor, where it could well have been covered by furniture and carpets.

The slab is worn and has been broken into several pieces; the three main pieces have been roughly mortared together, but the top is damaged with the corners missing and the left-hand side is also incomplete. The remaining sides are abraded so that the full extent of the marginal inscription no longer remains. The remainder of the design comprises two figures under a canopy, although traces of the canopy arch remain only on the top right-hand side. The military figure is in plate armour with a pointed bascinet on his head; he rests his feet on a lion. On his right is a female figure with a dog playing in the foot drapery of her gown. The section of the slab on which the upper part of her figure was incised is badly damaged and little detail remains apart from a few folds of her headdress. The marginal inscription in *textura* lettering is only partially preserved. What remains appears to read: '----- / ---iiii--

filia et una hered(um) d(omi)ne matris Michelis  
----- hered(um) ----- / --- Julii a(nn)o domini  
M CCCC xl et d(i)c(t)a Iho---/ ----- [Here  
lies Sir X Y, and Joan his wife] daughter and  
one of the heiresses of the lady mother of  
Michael .... heirs ....[he died the --] of July  
1440, and the said Joa[n died ... etc.].<sup>1</sup> Several  
words are rather conjectural, especially the first  
half of the right-hand side.

The incised slab is a product of the Fens I workshop, identifying characteristics including the *naif* facial features of the man and the hem drapery of the woman. This workshop probably operated in Boston in the period *c.* 1405- *c.* 1440, producing major and minor monumental brasses and incised slabs engraved from slabs of alabaster and Ancaster stone.<sup>2</sup> The majority of its products are located in Lincolnshire, but examples are also found in Norfolk, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, the wide spread doubtless being due to the good water transport links from Boston to a wide hinterland. In the case of the Everton slab it would have been shipped from Boston up the Witham/Trent river system. It is evidently one of the last products of this workshop.

Although the inscription provides some clues as to the identity of the couple commemorated, it has not proved possible to identify them. In the second quarter of the fifteenth century, Everton manor was held by Richard Wentworth, a lawyer and a J.P. of the quorum active in the county, but he died in 1448, too late for this incised slab to have commemorated him, and although his wife was an heiress, she was named Cecily, not Joan.<sup>3</sup> Wentworth held the manor

1 I am grateful to Jerome Bertram for his transcription and translation of the inscription.

2 S. Badham, 'The Fens I Series: An Early Fifteenth-Century Group of Monumental Brasses and Incised Slabs', *Jnl of the British Archaeological Assoc.* CXLII (1989), pp. 46-62; S. Badham, 'An Incised Slab from Doveridge, Derbyshire', *MBS Trans.*, XV (1994), pp.222-4.

3 S.J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 143, 174-7. Cecily was the daughter of John Tannesley of Nottingham (d. *c.* 1418). In his will he asked to be buried in St. Mary, Nottingham, where an alabaster table tomb with canopy is attributed to him.



of Everton from 1431 when Robert Whittington and Agnes, his wife, granted two-thirds of it to Wentworth, Cecily and their feoffees.<sup>4</sup> Again the name of the wife is wrong for Robert and Agnes Whittington to have been commemorated by the incised slab. The earlier history of the manor is obscure. The phrase in the inscription 'one of the heiresses of the lady mother of Michael' is puzzling and does not assist identification. It is not usual to record the dead as heiresses of their mothers, rather than their fathers. Michael is not a common name and Simon Payling knows of no fifteenth-century Nottinghamshire knight of the name.<sup>5</sup>

Dimensions: 2080 mm x 910 mm.

**Sally Badham**

**Fig. 2: Roger Edwards Almshouse brass, c. 1621, Llangeview, Monmouthshire.**

*Rubbing: J.A. Bradney, A History of Monmouthshire, III, pl. opp. p. 143.*

In 1612 Roger Edwards, a rich wool merchant,<sup>6</sup> founded an almshouse for a number of deserving individuals from the parishes of Llangeview, Gwernesney and Llangwm Uchaf, Monmouthshire. The site chosen for this was Llangeview, a few miles from Usk. Legend has it Edwards founded his almshouse because his sons wanted their inheritance. They conspired to loosen the saddle girths of his horse, hoping he would fall off and be killed. Edwards discovered the plot and cut his sons out of their inheritance by founding the almshouse. He also

built the Grammar School at Usk.<sup>7</sup> The almshouse was endowed by a deed on 29 April 1621. This story may be apocryphal, for nothing can be discovered concerning either Edwards or his family. His will makes no mention of any family members, other than legacies left to nieces and nephews.

Edwards died on 28 March 1624 and his will confirmed the earlier deed.<sup>8</sup> Under its terms three charities were set up. The Usk branch had lands assigned to it at Llanbaddoc and Ragland, amounting to 285 acres that included Usk Grammar School. The Almshouse branch had 397 acres of land, including the almshouse at Coedcwnnwr. The third branch was considerably smaller, only having 47 acres of land.<sup>9</sup>

The original buildings at Llangeview, having fallen into disrepair, were replaced in 1826, to a design by Edward Haycock.<sup>10</sup> The new almshouse formed two sides of a quadrangle, facing south and east, the space between the wings being filled with a garden. It housed twelve pensioners, each having a living room, bedroom and pantry, with a chapel in the north-east angle. By 1969 the last occupant had died and the fabric of the buildings deteriorated, necessitating the restoration of the building in 1996. The almshouse is once again looking after local inhabitants.<sup>11</sup>

On the external wall of the almshouse, beneath a covered veranda, is a brass plate measuring

4 Nottingham Archives, Newark Magnus Charity, DD.MG 1/16; I am grateful to Simon Payling for this reference.

5 I am grateful to Simon Payling for his advice on this point.

6 Edwards lived at Allt-y-bela, a traditional single-storey, cruck-frame building built in the mid fifteenth century. A century later a first floor with dormer windows was added, together with chimneys. Edwards added a three-storey tower complete with bells. See A. Gomme and A. Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes* (New Haven, 2008), p. 92.

7 J. Newman, *Gwent/Monmouthshire, The Buildings of Wales* (London, 2000), p. 595.

8 For his will (TNA: PRO, PROB.11/143) see J.H. Clark, *Usk Past and Present* (Usk, 1886), pp. 57-9.

9 Clark, *Usk*, p. 28.

10 Newman, *Gwent/Monmouthshire*, p. 309.

11 I am grateful to Kathryn Clarke, Secretary of the Roger Edwards Almshouse Trust, for information about the almshouse and the present state of the brass.

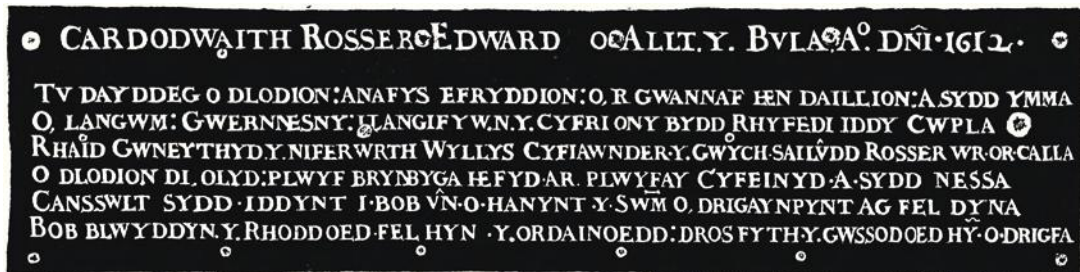


Fig. 2. Roger Edwards Almhouse brass, c. 1621, Llangeview, Monmouthshire  
(rubbing: J.A. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, III, pl. opp. p. 143)

153 x 307 mm. This was formerly over the entrance, beneath a stone inscription recording the rebuilding of 1826. Engraved on it in seven lines of Roman capitals is an inscription in Welsh rhyme, in the metrical form called *Mesur tri thrawiad* (three-beat metre). Roger Edwards's name has been changed to Rosser Edward, its Welsh equivalent. The following is a translation of the inscription:

The Charity of Roger Edwards of Allt-y-bela, the Year of Our Lord 1612.

A house for twelve poor people, maimed and crippled, enfeebled, aged and blind that are here from Llangwn, Gwernesney and Llangifyw. If the number be not sufficient, the number must be made up, according to the righteous will of the noble founder Rosser (one of the wisest of men). Of the wealth-lacking poor people of the parish of Usk and the adjoining parishes that are near –

a hundred shillings are for each of them. The sum of sixty pounds thus he gave for each year and ordained in this way, and established for ever this dwelling place.<sup>12</sup>

This inscription is of interest as one of only three pre-nineteenth-century Welsh examples known.<sup>13</sup> It is competently engraved, perhaps a product of a London workshop, although it does contain an error, *Allt y bula* should be *Allt y bela*. The inscription states that the almshouse was founded in 1612, but the brass probably dates from the time of its endowment in 1621. It seems likely that the inscription was composed by someone attached to the charity. The brass belongs to a group of commemorative inscriptions placed outside buildings, metal being preferred to stone as less liable to wear.<sup>14</sup>

Philip Whittemore

12 Translation taken from J.A. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire* (London, 1904-23), III, pt. 2, p. 143, who also provides a version of the inscription in modern Welsh orthography.

13 The others being the inscription to Adam of Usk (d. 1421), at Usk, and a lost inscription to Thomas Morgan (d. 1672), formerly at Caerleon, noted by Thomas

Dingley (T. Dineley [sic], *An Account of the Progress of His Grace Henry the First Duke of Beaufort through Wales, 1684* (London, 1864), p. 219.

14 See R.H. D'Elboux, 'External Brasses', *Trans. MBS*, VIII, pt. 4 (1946), pp. 150-7; VIII, pt. 6 (1949), pp. 208-19. The Llangeview brass is mentioned on pp. 213-4.

# Monumental Brass Society

(Founded in 1887 as the Cambridge University Association of Brass Collectors)

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Cover: Detail of the brass to John Feld, esq., [1477], (LSW.III), from Standon, Hertfordshire (see p. 373 concerning the conservation of this brass).

*Photo.: Martin Stuchfield.*

# Monumental Brass Society

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